

## PROCLUS

### *Commentary on Plato's Republic*

The commentary on Plato's *Republic* by Proclus (d. 485 CE), which takes the form of a series of essays, is the only sustained treatment of the dialogue to survive from antiquity. This three-volume edition presents the first complete English translation of Proclus' text, together with a general introduction that argues for the unity of Proclus' Commentary and orients the reader to the use that the Neoplatonists made of Plato's *Republic* in their educational program. Each volume is completed by a Greek word index and an English-Greek glossary that will help non-specialists to track the occurrence of key terms throughout the translated text. The second volume of the edition presents Proclus' essays on the tripartite soul and the virtues, female philosopher rulers, and the metaphysics and epistemology of the central books of the *Republic*. The longest of the essays in Volume II interprets the nature and significance of the 'marriage number' whose miscalculation leads to the degeneration of the ideal city-state.

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PROCLUS

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*Commentary on Plato's Republic*

VOLUME II

Essays 7–15

TRANSLATED WITH AN  
INTRODUCTION AND NOTES BY

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φυλακίδες καλαί καί δειναί

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Proclus' interpretation of Plato's notoriously obscure 'nuptial number' at *Republic* 546b–c contains much material on astronomy and astrology. We have been assisted in understanding this material and translating the technical terminology in it by Dr Dorian Gieseler Greenbaum. We thank our lucky stars for her expertise, so generously given.

Our Australian research assistant, John Burke, laid the foundations for the Greek Word Index as part of the preparation of volume I in this series. In this volume we have been ably assisted in preparing the final manuscript by Michael MacDougall at the University of Iowa.

Since Proclus' *Commentary* spends considerable time over Socrates' proposal that there should be female philosopher-rulers in the ideal city, it is only fitting that this book should be dedicated to the bright-eyed Athenas who rule in our hearts. If their writ ran wider than merely our internal *poleis*, our nations would doubtless be places of greater justice and happiness.

## *Note on the Text and Translation*

The translation is based on the 1899–1901 edition of Kroll.<sup>1</sup> Kroll's text falls into two volumes of unequal length in the Teubner series. The first volume has 296 pages, while the second has 368 pages of text (with additional scholia, indices, etc.). The text translated in this volume of our series with Cambridge University Press spans these two Teubner volumes. It contains Essays 7–12 corresponding to Kroll's volume 1, pages 206–296. It also contains Essays 13–15 which occupy pages 1–95 of Kroll's volume 2. We have reproduced in the margins the page numbers and approximate line numbers of this edition with the page numbers indicated by bold type.

All extant copies of Proclus' *Commentary on the Republic* seem to derive from a single source. This once formed a single codex which was copied in the ninth or tenth century by the same copyist who produced the Parisianus 1807 manuscript of Plato (Plato A), as well as Marcianus 246 containing Damascius. It was owned by Armonios or Harmonios of Athens, the nephew of Theodore of Gaza, and at some point the codex was split in two. In 1492, the first half was purchased by Janus Lascaris for the Medici library in Florence and we know that it was borrowed almost immediately by Marsilio Ficino.<sup>2</sup> This half remains in the Laurentian library as codex LXXX 9. This codex has suffered some damage – but not compared to the separated second half that now resides in the Vatican. The Laurentian manuscript breaks off midway through Essay 1. The remainder of that essay, along with all of Essay 2 and the first half of Essay 3 are now missing. Apart from these missing pages, however, the Laurentian manuscript is in reasonably good condition.

The second half of the original codex had a more difficult life. It was owned by the Salviati family of Florence and subsequently by the Colonna family before passing in 1821 to the Vatican library.<sup>3</sup> This latter half of the original codex also lacks pages at the beginning. It once opened at the start of Essay 13. From what remains, we can see that this essay was originally composed of an introduction followed by 45 paragraphs, but the first eight paragraphs and part of the ninth are now missing in the Vatican's copy. Kroll was, however, able to print the first two pages of Essay 13 on the basis of a sixteenth-century copy

<sup>1</sup> Kroll (1899–1901).

<sup>2</sup> Allen (2014), 359.

<sup>3</sup> Kroll (1901), vol. 2, vi–vii.

produced prior to the damage sustained by the manuscript presently in the Vatican. Unlike the Laurentian manuscript, Vatican 2197 is not only missing pages, but the top margins are in very poor condition. As a result, Kroll's volume 2 is replete with gaps and conjectures. Digital photographs are available from the Vatican Library<sup>4</sup> and we have tried to consult them to see if it is possible to arrive at any better reading. But we have made no improvements on Kroll – at least on this basis. The tops of a great many pages are torn and stained. Digital images, even of the quality provided by the Vatican library, are probably inferior to seeing the *Ding an sich*. Or perhaps the pages have darkened further since Kroll made his inspection in the 1890s. Or perhaps Kroll just had eyes like an eagle. In any event, we note any deviations from his text in the footnotes. These hypotheses are purely *a priori* and owe nothing to our empirical observation of the images kindly provided by the Digital Vatican Library.

There is only one modern language translation of the entirety of Proclus' *Republic Commentary* – the three-volume French translation of A. J. Festugière published in 1970.<sup>5</sup> Very substantial portions of the work were translated into Italian by M. Abbate in 2004.<sup>6</sup> When it is completed in the third and final volume, this series with Cambridge University Press will be the first complete English translation of Proclus' interpretation of Plato's *Republic*. We have sought to produce an English translation that is somewhat easier to read than these alternatives. Proclus' sentence structure is often rococo, with many embedded clauses and participle phrases. Making Proclus easy to read would probably involve crossing that hard-to-define line between translation and paraphrase. But we have at least sought to trim some particularly sprawling sentences into more bite-sized pieces. We have often added words or phrases to clarify what we take to be the sense and these clarifications are listed in square brackets [ ]. Where we or Kroll have supplied Greek words that are missing in the text, we use angle brackets < >. Gaps in the text are marked by \*\*\* and where Kroll has offered a guess at the number of letters missing, we supply this too. For instance \*\*\*15\*\*\* indicates a gap that Kroll supposed would be occupied by about 15 letters. You will note a marked increase in such lacunae as we pass into the territory of the badly damaged Vatican manuscript. The third and final volume in this series will be dedicated to Proclus' massive commentary on the Myth of Er (plus a short essay answering Aristotle's objections to the *Republic*). We regret to inform you that you should not expect the text to get better as we go along.

<sup>4</sup> [https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS\\_Vat.gr.2197](https://digi.vatlib.it/view/MSS_Vat.gr.2197).

<sup>5</sup> Festugière (1970).

<sup>6</sup> Abbate (2004).



Neoplatonism has a rich technical vocabulary that draws somewhat scholastic distinctions between, say, intelligible (*noêtos*) and intellectual (*noeros*) entities. To understand Neoplatonic philosophy it is necessary to have some grasp of these terms and their semantic associations, and there is no other way to do this than to observe how they are used. We mark some of the uses of these technical terms in the translation itself by giving the transliterated forms in parentheses. On the whole, we do this by giving the most common form of the word – that is, the nominative singular for nouns and the infinitive for verbs – even where this corresponds to a Greek noun in the translated text that may be in the dative or a finite verb form. This allows the utterly Greek-less reader to readily recognise occurrences of the same term, regardless of the form used in the specific context at hand. We have deviated from this practice where it is a specific form of the word that constitutes the technical term – for example, the passive participle of *metechlein* for ‘the participated’ (*to metechomenon*) or comparative forms such as ‘most complete’ (*teleôtaton*). We have also made exceptions for technical terms using prepositions (e.g. *kat’ aitian*, *kath’ hyparxin*) and for adverbs that are terms of art for the Neoplatonists. (e.g. *prôtôs*, *physikôs*).

Our volumes in the Proclus *Republic* series use the system of transliteration adopted in Cambridge University Press’ Proclus *Timaeus* series. This, in turn, is similar to the system used in the Ancient Commentators on Aristotle volumes. The salient points may be summarised as follows. We use the diaeresis for internal breathing, so that ‘immaterial’ is rendered *aîilos*, not *abulos*. We also use the diaeresis to indicate where a second vowel represents a new vowel sound, e.g. *aîdi-os*. Letters of the alphabet are much as one would expect. We use ‘y’ for υ alone as in *physis* or *hypostasis* – just because it looks odd otherwise – but ‘u’ for υ when it appears in diphthongs, e.g. *ousia* and *entaitha*. We use ‘cb’ for χ, as in *psychê*. We use ‘rb’ for initial ρ as in *rhêtôr*; ‘nk’ for γκ, as in *anankê*; and ‘ng’ for γγ, as in *angelos*. The long vowels η and ω are, of course, represented by *ê* and *ô*, while iota subscripts are printed on the line immediately after the vowel as in *ôïogenês* for ὡογενής. There is a Greek Word Index to each volume in the series. In order to enable readers with little or no Greek to use this Word Index, we have included an English–Greek glossary that matches our standard English translation for important terms with its Greek correlate given both in transliterated form and in Greek. For example, ‘procession: *proôdos*, πρόδος’.

The following abbreviations to the works of Proclus are used:

*in Remp.* = *Procli in Platonis Rem publicam commentarii*, ed. W. Kroll, 2 vols. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1899–1901)

- in Tim.* = *Procli in Platonis Timaeum commentaria*, ed. E. Diehl, 3 vols. (Leipzig: Teubner, 1903–6).
- in Parm.* = *Procli commentarius in Platonis Parmenidem (Procli philosophi Platonici opera inedita pt. III)*, ed. V. Cousin (Paris: Durand, 1864; repr. Hildesheim: Olms, 1961).
- in Alc.* = *Proclus Diadochus: Commentary on the first Alcibiades of Plato*, ed. L. G. Westerink (Amsterdam: North-Holland, 1954). Also used is A. Segonds (ed.), *Proclus: Sur le premier Alcibiade de Platon*, tomes I et II (Paris, 1985–6).
- in Crat.* = *Procli Diadochi in Platonis Cratylum commentaria*, ed. G. Pasquali (Leipzig: Teubner, 1908).
- ET* = *The Elements of Theology*, ed. E. R. Dodds, 2nd edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963).
- Plat.Theol.* = *Proclus: Théologie Platonicienne*, eds. H. D. Saffrey and L. G. Westerink, 6 vols. (Paris: Société d'édition 'Les belles lettres', 1968–97).
- de Aet.* = *Proclus: on the Eternity of the World*, eds. H. Lang and A. D. Marco (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).
- de Mal.* = *Proclus: On the Existence of Evils*, trans. J. Opsomer and C. Steel (London: Duckworth, 2003).
- Dec. Dub.* = *Proclus: Ten Problems Concerning Providence*, trans. J. Opsomer and C. Steel (London: Bloomsbury, 2012).
- Prov.* = *Proclus: On Providence*, trans. C. Steel (London: Duckworth, 2007).

Proclus also frequently confirms his understanding of Plato's text by reference to two theological sources: the 'writings of Orpheus' and the Chaldean Oracles. For these texts, the following abbreviations are used:

- Or. Chald.* = Ruth Majercik, *The Chaldean Oracles: Text, Translation and Commentary* (Leiden: Brill, 1989).
- Orph. fr.* = *Orphicorum fragmenta*, ed. O. Kern (Berlin: Weidmannsche, 1922).

Majercik uses the same numeration of the fragments as E. des Places in his Budé edition of the text.

References to the text of Proclus' *in Remp.* (as also of *in Tim.* and *in Crat.*) are given by Teubner volume number, followed by page and line numbers separated by a full stop, e.g. *in Tim.* II 2.19. References to the *Platonic Theology* are given by book, chapter, then page and line number in the Budé edition. References to the *Elements of Theology* are given by proposition number.

# General Introduction

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## I. THE STRUCTURE AND CHARACTER OF THE ESSAYS IN THIS VOLUME

The General Introduction to volume 1 in this series provides an overview of Proclus' *Republic Commentary*.<sup>1</sup> We discussed the place of Plato's *Republic* within the Neoplatonist curriculum and defended the conclusion that, while Proclus' *Republic Commentary* is different in character from his (incomplete) line-by-line commentaries on *Alcibiades I*, *Parmenides*, and *Timaeus*, it is not merely a grab bag of disparate materials that is unified only by having the *Republic* as their subject matter.<sup>2</sup> The seventeen essays that make up the *Republic Commentary* do cover the dialogue from beginning to end. The essays also differ from one another in character and tone. Some are expressly said to have been composed for one purpose (e.g. Essay 1 arises from a class on the *Republic*), while others were for special occasions. As we noted in volume I, Essay 6 reflects a lecture celebrating Plato's birthday. The longest essay in the *Republic Commentary*, Essay 16, covers the myth of Er in the manner of the line-by-line commentaries and is dedicated to Proclus' friend Marinus. While it has become customary to see the existing *Republic Commentary* as composed of essays that once made up a basic lecture course on the dialogue supplemented with special, advanced teaching on select parts of it, we struggle to see any vast differences in the level of the teaching or exegesis involved in the various essays. Any single essay is capable of swinging between fairly banal summary of Plato's dialogue suitable for beginners and difficult Neoplatonic exegesis that presupposes acquaintance with the full panoply of their elaborately structured metaphysics. So while the *Republic Commentary* does not have the uniformity of Proclus' *Timaeus* or *Parmenides* commentaries, we think it has more unity to it than a portmanteau of materials – one perhaps even assembled after Proclus' death. If readers do not find the argument of the General Introduction to volume I in this series persuasive, each of the essays translated in our series is prefaced by an Introduction

<sup>1</sup> Baltzly, Finamore, and Miles (2018).

<sup>2</sup> For references to the previous literature defending the 'portmanteau' understanding of the nature of Proclus' *Republic Commentary*, see volume I and Sheppard (2013).

that treats the essay in isolation. In short, you are free to treat them as elements in a portmanteau, but we think it is more illuminating to see them as chapters in a single, more-or-less uniform work whose purpose is to interpret those parts of the *Republic* that Neoplatonists would find most salient or most in need of explanation.

While volume I in this series translated and introduced Proclus' essays on Books I to III of Plato's *Republic*, the present volume contains essays dealing with Books V–X. The longest of these, Essay 13, concerns the mysterious 'nuptial number' (546c5–547b) whose miscalculation explains the decline of the ideal *polis* into the first of the degenerate political orders discussed in Books VIII and IX. Apart from a cottage industry attempting to decipher the complex mathematical instructions of 546b–c that flourished in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, this short stretch of text has not invited too much contemporary interest.<sup>3</sup> The mismatch in length between Proclus' 80 pages on *Republic* 545d–47c and contemporary judgements of its importance has perhaps contributed to the relative neglect of Proclus' *Republic Commentary* as a whole. Yet the combined volume of the other essays contained here outweighs that of the essay on the nuptial number and these do deal with aspects of Plato's text that continue to command the attention of contemporary interpreters.

Topic of essay	Length (pages in Kroll)	Platonic text commented upon
Essay 7 – on the tripartite division of the soul and the virtues	30 (I 206–35)	Book IV
Essay 8 – on whether virtue in women is the same as in men	15 (I 236–50)	Book V, 451c–57c
Essay 9 – on the views of Theodore of Asine on whether men's and women's virtue is the same	7 (I 251–7)	Book V, 451c–57c
Essay 10 – on the difference between the philosopher and the lover of sights and sounds	10 (I 258–68)	Book V, 476a–80a
Essay 11 – on the Good	19 (I 267–87)	Book VI, 504d–9e

<sup>3</sup> Prominent examples of this literature include Adam (1891) and Diès (1936).

# 1. The structure and character of the essays in this volume

(Continued)

Topic of essay	Length (pages in Kroll)	Platonic text commented upon
Essay 12 – on the Cave	10 (1 287–96)	Book VII, 514a–17e
Essay 13 – on the speech of the Muses and the interpretation of the nuptial number	80 (2 1–80)	Book VIII, 546c–7b
Essay 14 – on the three arguments that the life of the just person is happier	3 (2 81–3)	Book IX, 580a–8c
Essay 15 – on the three main topics of Book X	12 (2 84–95)	Book X <i>in toto</i>

It must be conceded immediately that Essay 13 stands out, not only for its length but for the character of the commentary on it. It is prefaced with an introduction that re-visits some of the same issues that occupied Essay 1. Proclus treats ‘the speech of the Muses’<sup>4</sup> as if it were a mini-dialogue contained within the *Republic* and accordingly addresses its character and style as he did with the *Republic* as a whole. In addition, his exegesis of the marriage number involves citing interpretations or comments on the subject from a host of predecessors. This contrasts sharply with the Essays 10–12 on the sight-lovers, the Sun, and the Cave.

If Essay 13 stands apart as seemingly very different from the other essays in this volume – or in the *Republic Commentary* as a whole – this is perhaps because *Republic* 545d5–47b1 stands out to the Neoplatonically inclined reader. Modern readers may suppose that the fact that Plato has Socrates call upon the Muses to tell ‘how discord broke out’ among the guardians is simply a literary device. But Plato’s ancient readers were inclined to take seriously the idea that in the dialogues Socrates may utter ‘divinely inspired speech.’<sup>5</sup> By contrast, Grube’s lengthly (and

<sup>4</sup> Modern readers of Plato’s *Republic* may well be scratching their heads at this point: ‘The speech of the Muses?’ This episode in book VIII 545e–47a does not now attract much interpretive attention. In it, Socrates turns to the Muses to tell the assembled party ‘how dissension first broke out’ among the guardians in such a way as to lead to the first stage of political decline: from the ideal constitution to timocracy. It is they who narrate the details of the notoriously obscure ‘nuptial number’.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Hermias in *Phdr.* 59.1 Lucarini and Moerschini (2012), where Proclus’ friend and classmate, Hermias, takes very seriously that Socrates is verging on being possessed by the Nymphs at *Phdr.* 238c.

otherwise helpful) note on the marriage number nicely sums up the lack of seriousness with which modern readers tend to treat the idea that the Muses' description of the first steps in the degeneration of the ideal *polis* is importantly different from the surrounding text:

The mock heroic invocation to the Muses and their talking in tragic language should warn us not to take the mathematical myth which follows too seriously or too literally.

(Grube, p. 197, n. 1)

But it is precisely the intrusion of these otherworldly voices into Plato's dialogue that prompts Proclus to take it very seriously. So the length of Proclus' treatment of this part of Plato's text may look eccentric from our point of view. But that may say as much about us and our presuppositions as it does about any deeply heterogeneous nature of the materials assembled in his *Republic Commentary*.

What about the fact that Essay 13 discusses the views of predecessors in ways that the other essays in this volume do not? It is a familiar observation that Proclus similarly 'names names' in his *Timaeus Commentary* in ways that he does not in the *Parmenides Commentary*. The *Republic Commentary* sits somewhere in between: some essays engage with other Platonists, while others do not. Is Essay 13 marked as having a profoundly different provenance from Essays 10–12 and 14–15 by virtue of the fact that Proclus names a lot of names in the former, but none in the latter group of essays? Consider that the Muses communicate through Socrates in a Pythagoreanising manner. That, after all, is the point of the nuptial number. In the *Timaeus Commentary*, Proclus describes this mode of communication as follows:

[I]t contains loftiness of mind, intuition (*to noeron*), inspiration, a tendency to link everything to intelligibles, to depict the Whole in terms of numbers, to give an indication of things in a symbolic and mystical fashion, to lead upwards, to remove one's focus on particulars, to state with affirmation.

(in *Tim.* I 7.26–30, trans. Tarrant)

Faced with the mathematically dense and symbolic text of the *Timaeus*, Proclus frequently resorts to the insights of his fellow Platonists – particularly those who are part of the chorus of Bacchantes following after the divine Plato (cf. *Plat. Theol.* I §1. 6.16–7.8). So when Plato communicates in the Pythagorean mode, this seems to call for Proclus to synthesise a whole team of exegetes in order to properly discern his meaning. It may be that he even imagines a kind of symmetry between the plural voices of the Muses and the plurality of exegetical perspectives that he brings to the task of interpreting them. There is a gap in our text precisely at the point at which Proclus takes up the question

why Plato does not call upon one authoritative voice – the Leader of the Muses (i.e. Apollo) – to prophesy about the sources of the downfall of the ideal *polis* (in *Remp.* II 4.11–22). The answer is incomplete in our text, but it begins by contrasting Apollo as the single author of a single cosmic harmony with the plurality of Muses and their pluralised harmonies. Perhaps Proclus supposed that a chorus of exegetes were needed to extract the multi-layered meanings of the plural voices of the Muses.

Apart from the nuptial number, Proclus' most sustained discussions occur in relation to the virtues and the tripartite soul in *Republic* IV and in relation to the question of female guardians in *Republic* V. In the central, metaphysical books of *Republic* VI and VII, the longest discussion is over the nature of the Form of the Good. These are, of course, still aspects of Plato's dialogue that are the subject of interpretive disagreements among contemporary philosophers. So Essay 13 perhaps creates the impression that Proclus' interests in his *Commentary* are more eccentric (from the modern point of view) than they really are.

If Essay 13 creates the impression that the *Republic Commentary* is an eccentric and scholastic approach to Plato's text, Essays 8 and 9 have contributed to the claim that it is a grab-bag of different materials relating to the *Republic*. Both obviously cover the same ground in general, but the second of the two essays on female guardians relates the views of Theodore of Asine on the question of whether the virtues of men and women are, in fact, one and the same. This led Festugière to comment that:

Essay 9 cannot therefore be regarded as a simple appendix to the previous one (for in this case we would only have Theodore's contribution and the objection drawn from the comparison with *Laws* at 256.2 and 256.15–257.6): it must be considered as a new essay on the same subject, perhaps composed long after the previous one. And this proves, therefore, that the *Commentary on the Republic* is not a continuous series of lessons forming the same course arranged according to chronological order, but rather a collection of essays, the only common feature of which is that they all have the *Republic* as their subject.<sup>6</sup>

We have already addressed the question of the unity of Proclus' *Republic Commentary* in the General Introduction to volume I. There we argued that, in spite of differences among the essays, there is more unity to

<sup>6</sup> Cette IX<sup>e</sup> Dissertation ne peut donc être regardée comme un simple appendice à la précédente (on n'aurait en ce cas que la contribution de Théodore et l'objection tirée de la comparaison avec les *Lois* 256.2 s. + 256.15–257.6): il faut la tenir pour une nouvelle dissertation sur le même sujet, peut-être composée longtemps après la précédente. Et ceci prouve, dès lors, que le Commentaire sur la *République* n'est pas une suite continue de leçons formant un même cours selon qu'elles ont été données dans l'ordre chronologique, mais plutôt un recueil d'essais, dont le seul trait commun est qu'ils ont tous pour objet la *République*. Festugière (1970), vol. 2, 54 n.1.

them than one would expect of a portmanteau unified only by the fact that the essays deal with the same Platonic dialogue. Proclus does cover the whole work – albeit not in the same way that the line-by-line commentaries on *Parmenides*, *Timaeus*, and *Alcibiades* do. Moreover, there is reason to think that his choices about which questions to pose about Plato's text respond to ancient sensibilities about the job of the Platonic interpreter. So while the Myth of Er or the marriage number are not central to Plato's text from our point of view, Proclus' commentary itself, together with the reports that it contains of the readings of these Platonic passages by earlier Platonists, shows the extent to which ancient interpreters thought these parts of the text were central to understanding Plato's philosophy. Finally, we observed that even a 'proper commentary', like Proclus' *Timaeus Commentary*, contains some traces of earlier drafts. Thus *Tim.* 35b4–6 is quoted twice and interpreted twice – the first in a more basic way, and the second with more attention to its symbolic significance. So while Festugière's comment that Essay 9 is not merely an appendix to Essay 8, but a new essay on the same subject, is undeniable, this does not render the *Republic Commentary* any less a unified work than the *Timaeus Commentary*.

## 2. INTERTEXTUALITY IN ESSAYS 7–13 OF THE *REPUBLIC COMMENTARY*

If Proclus' Essays 9 and 13 are conspicuous for the way they name the views of other thinkers, then Essays 10, 11, and 12 are conspicuous for the way in which they seek to connect the correct interpretation of Plato's *Republic* to other dialogues. Proclus explicitly connects the correct understanding of the shadows and reflections discussed in the Cave Analogy to the theory of images in the *Sophist*. Essay 10 also turns to the *Sophist* to shed light on opinion and discursive reasoning, as well as the distinction between a faculty's power or dynamis and its object. Because of the role that truth plays in the Sun Analogy, *Philebus* 64b, ff. is deemed to be relevant to the correct understanding of what Socrates says here in the *Republic*. As the Introduction to Essay 11 shows, truth is a potent causal principle. It is not merely a property of representations that correctly mirror reality: the 'light of truth' constitutes reality from a position high up in the Neoplatonists' structured metaphysics.<sup>7</sup> Of course, throughout his interpretation of the *Republic*, Proclus takes the *Timaeus* to be relevant to the correct understanding of Plato's thought. Indeed, the most pervasive theme in Proclus' reading of the *Republic*

<sup>7</sup> Taormina (2000).



### 3. Key themes from the *Republic* outside Proclus' *Republic Commentary*

is the extension of the two-term analogy between the constitution or *politeia* of the city-state and individual soul to a three-term analogy between the cosmic, civic, and psychic constitutions. Modern readers of the *Republic* who suppose that the text should be interpreted from just the text may find this disappointing. But often the connections drawn between the *Republic* and other dialogues are at least creative and invite us to confront some of our deepest philosophical assumptions.

### 3. KEY THEMES FROM THE *REPUBLIC* OUTSIDE PROCLUS' *REPUBLIC COMMENTARY*

We conclude this General Introduction with a brief consideration of the ways in which the key ideas of the central books of the *Republic* are interpreted outside the context of Proclus' *Republic Commentary*.

#### 3.1. The *Republic's* Dialectic in the *Parmenides Commentary*

Both contemporary interpreters of Plato and the Neoplatonists faced the question of reconciling the dialogues' various discussions of dialectic.<sup>8</sup> The *Republic* makes dialectic the distinctive philosophical method through which the guardians know the Forms and especially the Form of the Good (*Rep.* VII 534b–c). The dialectician is able to 'give an account of the essence of each thing'. His cognitive state is distinguished from that of the mathematician in its nature – intellection or *noësis* versus discursive thought or *dianoia* – and perhaps also in its objects (*Rep.* VI 511a–c). The movement of thought involved in dialectic is also distinguished from that involved in mathematical thinking. We are told by Socrates that while dialectic treats hypotheses as hypotheses, using them as steps to ascend to an unhypothetical first principle, mathematicians proceed from hypotheses to a conclusion (510b4–9, 511b3–c2). Moreover, dialectic ultimately 'does away with' its hypotheses (533c8). Finally, while mathematical thinking involves the use of images, dialectic does not (510d5–511a1, 511b8–c2). So dialectic plays a key role in Plato's *Republic*. The authority of the guardians to lead the ideal *polis* is grounded in the psychic consequences – both in terms of knowledge and character or motivation – that results from their acquaintance with, and love of, the Forms. Dialectic, in turn, is the method through which

<sup>8</sup> For a sketch of the contemporary landscape around the topic of dialectic over all the dialogues, see Benson (2006) or, more briefly, Baltzly (2012). Other reference works treat dialectic in the *Republic* in separate entries from dialectic in, e.g., the *Philebus*. Cf. Fine (2008).

they gain this acquaintance. But in spite of this key role, Socrates' remarks on the nature of dialectic are far from clear. The reader is left to wonder in what, exactly, it consists. The explanation of the nature of dialectic we are given does not seem proportionate to the argumentative weight resting on it in the dialogue.

Things become even more puzzling when we look at dialogues other than the *Republic*. There are, of course, remarks about the method of dialectic in the *Phaedrus*, *Sophist*, and *Philebus* that do not resemble closely the method of dialectic described in the *Republic*. Here it is the method of collection and division that is identified with dialectic.<sup>9</sup> Readers of Plato who take a chronological approach to the dialogues may find this switch unproblematic. Perhaps Plato just changed his mind. But Proclus is not such a reader. So how does he deal with the relation between the different procedures identified as *dialektikê*?

The relation between the *Republic*'s notion of dialectic and the method of collection and division emerges in Proclus' *Parmenides Commentary* but in a rather surprising context. At 648.1 Proclus takes up the arguments of those who assert that Parmenides' method cannot be the same as Plato's dialectic.<sup>10</sup> Three grounds are offered for this non-identity between Parmenidean and Platonic dialectic. First, Parmenides urges the young Socrates to engage in it, but Socrates recommends against young people being allowed to engage in dialectic too early (*Rep.* 537–39d). Second, Parmenidean dialectic is described as an exercise (*askêsis*) and Proclus takes this to mean that it involves arguing both sides of a question. Thus, he claims, it more closely resembles Aristotelian dialectic than Plato's. Proclus then summarises Platonic dialectic in a way that resembles the *Republic*:

Plato's dialectic is described in the dialogue as leading to the highest and purest stage of knowledge and insight, since its activity is based on intelligible Forms, through which it advances to the very first member of the intelligible world, paying no attention to human opinion but using irrefutable knowledge at every step. (6491, trans. Dillon and Morrow)<sup>11</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Perhaps most explicitly at *Phdr.* 266b3–c1. Τούτων δὴ ἔγωγε αὐτός τε ἐραστής, ὦ Φαῖδρε, τῶν διαίρεσεων καὶ συναγωγῶν, ἵνα οἷός τε ὦ λέγειν τε καὶ φρονεῖν .... καὶ μέντοι καὶ τοὺς δυναμένους αὐτὸ δρᾶν εἰ μὲν ὀρθῶς ἢ μὴ προσαγορεύω, θεὸς οἶδε, καλῶ δὲ οὐκ μέχρι τοῦδε διαλεκτικούς.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Steel (1997).

<sup>11</sup> τὴν δὲ Πλάτωνος τὸ ἀκρότατον παρ' αὐτῷ λέγεσθαι καὶ καθαρῶτατον νοῦ καὶ φρονήσεως, ἐν τοῖς νοητοῖς εἶδει τὴν πραγματείαν ἑαυτῆς ἰδρύσασαν καὶ διὰ τούτων χωροῦσαν ἐπ' αὐτὸ τὸ ἡγούμενον τοῦ νοητοῦ παντός, οὐ πρὸς δόξαν βλέπουσαν ἀνθρώπων, ἀλλ' ἐπιστήμη περὶ πάντων ἀνελέγκτω χρωμένην.

### 3. Key themes from the *Republic* outside Proclus' *Republic Commentary*

Finally, while Parmenidean dialectic is characterised as like a kind of 'babbling', Platonic dialectic is the 'capstone of knowledge' (*Rep.* 534e) which is suitable only for genuine philosophers (*Soph.* 253e). This final point suggests that Proclus' Middle Platonic opponents do not sharply distinguish the method of collection and division described in the *Sophist* (and elsewhere) from the dialectic of the *Republic*. Or at the very least, Proclus has seen fit to put their arguments in ways that elide the difference since both *Republic* and *Sophist* are mentioned in the same breath, as if it were obvious that these things were one and the same, or at least closely related.

Let us set aside as not philosophically interesting the tedious special pleading that Proclus does on behalf of the young Socrates (who is, of course, so obviously talented that he should enjoy an exemption for youthful participation in Platonic dialectic). The overall thrust of Proclus' reconciliation of the putative differences between Parmenidean and Platonic dialectic is to assimilate collection and division to the method of hypothesis employed in the latter half of the *Parmenides*. Proclus offers a tripartite division of Platonic dialectic: the kind that argues both sides of the question; the kind that exhibits only the truth; and the kind that serves only to refute false beliefs (*in Parm.* 654.11–13). The second kind seems to include both Republican dialectic and the method of collection and division from the *Phaedrus* and the *Statesman*. As Proclus says:

In another form of its activity, dialectic places the mind at the outset of the region of thought where it is most at home, looking at truth itself, 'sitting on a sacred pedestal' (*Phaedr.* 254b7), which Socrates says unfolds before the mind the whole intelligible world, making its way from Form to Form, until it reaches the very first Form of all, sometimes using analysis, sometimes definition, now demonstrating, now dividing, both moving downwards from above and upwards from below until, having examined in every way the whole nature of the intelligible, it climbs aloft to that which is beyond all being. When it has safely anchored the soul there, it has reached its goal and there will no longer be anything greater to be desired. You could say these are the functions of dialectic spoken of in the *Phaedrus* and in the *Sophist*, the former dividing dialectical procedures into two, the latter into four parts.

(*in Parm.* 653.18–33, trans. Dillon and Morrow)<sup>12</sup>

<sup>12</sup> ἑτέρα δὲ ἀναπαύουσα ἤδη τὸν νοῦν οἰκειοτάτῃ θεωρίᾳ τῶν ὄντων καὶ αὐτὴν ὁρώσα καθ' αὐτὴν τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἐν ἀγνῶ βάθρῳ βεβῶσαν, ἣν φησὶν ὁ Σωκράτης ἅπαν τὸ νοητὸν ἀνελίττειν, δι' εἰδὼν ἀεὶ πορευομένην ἕως ἂν εἰς αὐτὸ καταντήσῃ τὸ πρῶτον, τὰ μὲν ἀναλύουσιν, τὰ δὲ ὀριζομένην, τὰ δὲ ἀποδεικνύσαν, τὰ δὲ διαιροῦσαν, ἀνωθέν τε καὶ κάτωθεν εἰς τὸ ἀναντες χωροῦσαν, ἕως ἂν πᾶσαν πάντῃ διερευνωμένη τὴν τῶν νοητῶν φύσιν εἰς τὸ ἐπέκεινα πάντων ἀναδράμῃ τῶν ὄντων, οὗ τὴν ψυχὴν ὀρμίσασα τελέως οὐκ ἔτι ποθήσεται κρεῖττον ἐφετὸν ἐπὶ

Steel's new Oxford Classical Text reveals the extent to which this passage approaches a cento of Platonic passages. The quotation from *Phaedrus* 247b8 is of course obvious. Steel rightly notes the connection between Proclus' ἅπαν τὸ νοητὸν ἀνελίττειν, δι' εἰδῶν ἀεὶ πορευομένην and the double use of the same participle at the point where the divine souls survey the realm of Forms in *Phaedrus* 247a8–b3 ἄκραν ἐπὶ τὴν ὑπουράνιον ἀψίδα πορεύονται πρὸς ἄναντες, ἥ δὲ τὰ μὲν θεῶν ὀχήματα ἰσορρόπως εὐήνια ὄντα ῥαδίως πορεύεται, τὰ δὲ ἄλλα μόγῃς. But Proclus' δι' εἰδῶν ἀεὶ πορευομένην also echoes the way in which the *Republic* describes dialectic as 'moving by means of Forms, through Forms, to its conclusions which are Forms' (511c1–2, trans. Grube ἀλλ' εἴδουσιν αὐτοῖς δι' αὐτῶν εἰς αὐτά, καὶ τελευτᾷ εἰς εἶδη). Now in Proclus' passage, this movement extends upward rather than downward. So that instead of τελευτᾷ εἰς εἶδη, dialectic arrives at what is first (τὸ πρῶτον). And dialectic's omni-directional capacity is stressed in ἀνωθέν τε καὶ κάτωθεν. So, it goes through Forms to Forms, but also arises through Forms (perhaps by seeing many kinds as unified by their genus) and descends through Forms (dividing a genus into its parts). Arising to the first principle and descending again it 'analyses, defines, demonstrates, and divides' along the way. Analysing, dividing, and defining are plausibly activities associated with the method of collection and division from the later dialogues. But in the next sentence we find διερευνημένη τὴν τῶν νοητῶν φύσιν εἰς τὸ ἐπέκεινα πάντων ἀναδράμῃ τῶν ὄντων which clearly recalls the Form of the Good in *Republic* 509b9 (ἐπέκεινα τῆς οὐσίας). The soul is finally 'safely anchored' here and Proclus' language in relation to this anchoring may function to suggest a confluence between Platonic dialectic and the practice of theurgy.<sup>13</sup> So Proclus' second form of Platonic dialectic – the kind that μόνον τὸ ἀληθὲς ἐκφαινούσης (*in Parm.* 654.17) – seems to combine what is described in the *Republic* with collection and division and, perhaps, even theurgical practice.<sup>14</sup> So the truth-revealing kind of dialectic is capacious indeed. Where modern interpreters have

τέλος ἤκουσα· καὶ ταύτης ἂν εἴποις ἔργα εἶναι τὰ τε ἐν Φαίδρῳ ῥηθέντα καὶ τὰ ἐν Σοφιστῇ, τὰ μὲν διχῇ διηρημένα, τὰ δὲ τετραχῇ τῆς διαλεκτικῆς ἔργα.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. van den Berg (2000), especially the appendix in which van den Berg catalogues the extensive use of this image. He relies on Saffrey and Westerink *Platonic Theology* vol. IV, 147 n. 3 for the connection with the *Chaldean Oracles*. On van den Berg's reading, Proclus supposed that only the divine Nous or Intellect – equated with the Demiurge – contemplates the Forms. The human soul's access to the Demiurge is mediated through the Leader Gods of *Plat. Theol.* VI. Van den Berg further argues that humans can use theurgy to bring themselves to the attention of these Leader Gods in order to facilitate access to the Demiurge.

<sup>14</sup> For the view that philosophical and theurgic methods of ascent to the divine should be seen as complementary rather than opposed alternatives, see Baltzly (2006).

### 3. Key themes from the *Republic* outside Proclus' *Republic Commentary*

found a puzzle about how Plato's seemingly different characterisations of dialectic fit together, Proclus supposes that these are simply different perspectives on a single movement of thought.

Proclus' passage quoted above is not really an interpretive argument that this unified conception of truth-revealing dialectic is present across Plato's dialogues. The rich and rapid-fire string of associations or near quotations seems intended to reveal a unity of method between *Republic*, on the one hand, and *Phaedrus*, *Statesman*, and *Sophist* on the other. An audience that knows Plato's dialogues sufficiently well would literally hear the presence of all these dialogues in Proclus' description of this species of dialectic.

In the General Introduction to volume I in this series we introduced the notion that our Neoplatonic texts constitute performances of a distinctively philosophical kind of *paideia* or education.<sup>15</sup> The goal of the educational programme from which works like the *Republic Commentary* and the *Parmenides Commentary* emerged was a condition that surpasses the limitations of discursive thought. As a result, we submit that we should always be attuned to the possibility that a Platonic commentary is showing rather than saying or exhibiting rather than arguing. This seems particularly possible when – as we shall see in our detailed examination of dialectic in the *Republic* in Essay 11 – dialectic's pathway to the Good lies through subtraction or the stripping away of the plurality of words (*in Remp.* I 285.5–9).

#### 3.2. The Good of the *Republic* and the One of the *Parmenides* in the *Platonic Theology*

The famous passage at *Republic* 509b6 on the transcendence of the Good is regularly used by the Neoplatonists to show that the first principle of all things is hyper-essential or 'beyond being'. This is exactly what we find at *Plat. Theol.* II §4, 32.1ff., where Proclus evinces amazement that putative Platonists like Origen could have been so inattentive to Plato's words as to suppose that the first principle is merely intellective. Once he has set the scene by quoting from the *Republic* and working from this to the complete transcendence of the One, Proclus recruits *Sophist* 244b–245b to the same purpose – though it is hardly obvious that it makes exactly the same point.<sup>16</sup> Next, the *Philebus* is made to teach the same lesson with the help of a distinction that figures prominently in

<sup>15</sup> Vol. I, 30–2, 125–6.

<sup>16</sup> *Plat. Theol.* II §4, 34.12–35.9 As Saffrey and Westerink note: 'Cette exégèse du *Sophiste* est une interprétation du *ἓν ὅν* en fonction de la transcendance de l'Un déjà établie par l'exégèse précédente de la *République*.'

Proclus' Essay 11 on the Good. As we shall see in more detail in our Introduction to Essay 11, Proclus distinguishes between the Good as first principle, the Good as a Form, and the Good in or for us.<sup>17</sup> The *Philebus* passage is made to testify to the transcendence of the Good as first principle by analogical reasoning. The *Philebus* (allegedly) shows that the good for us is not the same as intellect or nous – any more than it is pleasure on its own. But if our good is something beyond intellect in our case, the same reasoning shows that, in ranks of the real, the Good is something beyond even the First Intellect.<sup>18</sup> Finally, Proclus adds the testimony of the first hypothesis of the *Parmenides* to the case against Platonists like Origen. This teaches the lesson 'most clearly' (*saphestata*).

But if the *Republic* and the *Parmenides* form the bookends of the case for the hyper-essential transcendence of the first principle in *Plat. Theol.* II §4, one might well wonder why the first dialogue calls it the Good and the other dialogue calls it the One. One answer is that the dialogues differ methodologically. The *Parmenides* teaches us through the method of negation, while the *Republic* instructs through analogy (*Plat. Theol.* II §5, 37.12–19). Proclus' own answer to this question<sup>19</sup> relies on the complementary but opposite quasi-processes of procession and reversion. (These are, of course, quasi-processes since they take place among both beings that are in time and those that are eternal and, moreover, even among the time-bound beings, these quasi-processes are without beginning or end.) The *Parmenides* 'reveals' that which is beyond everything in the mode of procession. The *Republic*, by contrast, 'represents' the first principle through the mode of reversion through which all things go back to it.<sup>20</sup> Proclus' choice of verbs here is careful: neither dialogue can describe or otherwise give a *logos* of that which lies beyond all thought and all *logos*. The method of analogy that takes the perspective of reversion is risky. In Essay 11, Proclus reminds the audience that taking analogies too far will not only mislead, but carry

<sup>17</sup> While the interpretation of the *Philebus* here only makes use of two of these senses (the good in us and the Good as first principle), the Essay 11 distinction between the Good as Form and the Good as super-essential first principle returns later at *Plat. Theol.* II. §7, 46.13–48.26.

<sup>18</sup> *Plat. Theol.* II §4, 36.7–11 'Ο αὐτός τοίνυν λόγος τὸ τε ἀγαθὸν ἐξηρῆσθαι τοῦ πρωτίστου νοῦ καὶ τὴν εὐδαιμονίαν οὐ κατὰ τὴν νόησιν μόνον ἀλλὰ κατὰ τὴν παντελῆ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ παρουσίαν ἀφορίζεται· τὸ γὰρ νοερὸν τῆς ἐνεργείας εἶδος αὐτὸ καθ' αὐτὸ πρὸς τὸ μακάριον ἑλλιπές.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. 37.12–13: Δοκεῖ δ' ἔμοιγε κατὰ μὲν τὸν ἕτερον τῶν τρόπων ...

<sup>20</sup> *Plat. Theol.* II §5, 37.19–38.3 κατὰ μὲν τὸν ἕτερον τῶν τρόπων τὴν πρόοδον ἐκφαίνειν τὴν ἀπ' ἐκείνου τῶν τε ἄλλων ἀπάντων καὶ πρὸ τῶν ἄλλων τῶν θείων διακόσμων.... Κατὰ δὲ αὐτὸν τὸν ἕτερον τὴν πρὸς αὐτὸ τῶν προελθόντων ἐπιστροφὴν ἀπεικονίζεται.

#### 4. Conclusion

us off into sophistry (*in Remp.* I 274.24) and false beliefs (*Plat. Theol.* II 39.6–9). They give us only an indication (*endeixis*) of similarity.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

We believe that both examples of Proclus' exegesis of the *Republic* outside the context of the *Republic Commentary* highlight the performative aspect of Neoplatonic interpretation. In the former, Proclus' audience can literally hear the unity of collection and division with Republican dialectic through the description of the 'truth-revealing' form of dialectic knitted together from various Platonic passages. The unified character of dialectic between the *Republic* and the *Phaedrus* is attested to by the cento constructed from both dialogues. In the second example, Proclus acknowledges the limits of saying and counsels us on the proper use of showing. But what is done – indeed what can be done – in his exegesis of the analogy of the Sun but show? We encourage the readers of this first complete English translation of the *Republic Commentary* to approach this text with different questions in mind. Perhaps it is more fruitful to ask, 'How is pagan Platonism being performed in Proclus' work?' than it is to ask, 'Is Proclus' reading of Plato's dialogue correct?' or 'Is it wholly consistent with his remarks on Plato elsewhere?' In this way, we come closer to situating the works of the Neoplatonists in the lived context from which they emerged: as part of an effort to achieve – with one's fellow Platonists – contact with the divine.

# On the *Republic* of Plato: Essays 7–15

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## Introduction to Essay 7

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### I. OUR BOOK IV AND PROCLUS'

Essay 7 principally concerns *Republic* IV 427d–444a in which Socrates and his interlocutors first look for justice and the other virtues within the city they have described and then turn to the question of whether the soul admits of a similar tripartite structure with analogous virtues within the individual.<sup>1</sup> Plato's discussion in Book IV is apparently innocent of the metaphysics and epistemology of the middle books – though of course the ensuing discussions of philosophers and Forms will deepen the understanding of what it is for the reasoning part to rule in the soul.<sup>2</sup> Nonetheless, as with the function argument of Book I (352c–53e), Socrates' reasoning proceeds from admissions that the none-too-philosophical Glaucon and Adeimantus make and does not presuppose the theory of Forms or any idea of the soul as an incorporeal substance that is more akin to the Forms than to the body. The same, of course, is at least superficially true of Aristotle's function argument in *Nicomachean Ethics* I, chapter 7.<sup>3</sup> Common to both arguments is the use of the broad sense of 'virtue' or *aretê* according to which it is simply a quality of a thing that permits it to perform its function well. The subject whose functioning is enhanced by its aretaic features could be a human being or it could be a pruning knife (*Rep.* I 352e) and this has been something that contemporary virtue ethics regards as an attractive feature of this approach. By not confining the aretaic to the realm of the moral, virtue ethics attempts to circumvent the force of John

<sup>1</sup> The most sustained treatment of Essay 7 in the literature is MacIsaac (2009) from whom we have learnt much. This brief introduction takes up some, but not all, of the themes that MacIsaac pursues.

<sup>2</sup> The subsequent books significantly alter our understanding of all parts of the soul, though none more so than reason. As Ferrari observes, in Book IV the parts of the soul look more like faculties. In Books VIII and IX, they seem more like drives (Ferrari 2007).

<sup>3</sup> Though of course the question of whether Aristotle's function argument is really metaphysically innocuous or whether it presupposes distinctively Aristotelian notions of form and final causation is disputed. Cf. Irwin (1980) on the one hand and Roche (1988) on the other.

L. Mackie's 'argument from queerness'.<sup>4</sup> In essence, Mackie objected that if moral rightness were a property of actions, then some states of affairs would have to possess an intrinsic 'ought-to-be-doneness' whose metaphysical basis could only lie in 'metaphysically queer' properties. By shifting the focus from actions to character traits, virtue ethics attempts to cast the ought-to-be-exhibitedness of the moral virtues as no more metaphysically suspect than that of non-moral virtues. Given that this is a pruning knife, it ought to have a blade with such-and-such qualities. Its being a pruning knife is a matter of it having a certain function or *ergon* and virtues are merely *ergon*-enhancing qualities. Thus one of the attractive features of virtue ethics was its promise of naturalising normativity by locating the moral virtues on a continuum of other, not-specifically-moral aretaic properties of things other than humans.

By contrast, Proclus' approach to the arguments of *Republic* IV is to de-naturalise the virtues of moderation, courage, wisdom, and justice (and specifically to de-materialise them). He distinguishes the moral virtues from the wider sense of *aretê* that we apply to inanimate objects. His first restriction is that virtues in the strict sense relate only to things that are alive. But since life is two-fold – with both a cognitive and conative aspect – virtues in the strict sense are qualities that pertain only to living things that can both understand (in some sense) and desire (in some sense) (206.15). Whereas contemporary virtue ethics seeks to stress the continuity of the aretaic with non-moral excellences, Proclus wants to separate them. Moreover, wherever possible, he exhibits the premises in Socrates' arguments as at least fully consistent with, and often implied by, the metaphysics of the middle books of the *Republic* and, in particular, the account of the generation of the soul given in the *Timaeus*. Clarifications of Socrates' meaning and potential objections to Socrates' claims are dealt with by invoking the heaviest metaphysical artillery that Proclus can avail himself of. Yet Proclus also claims that Socrates in no ways 'wrongs' or 'cheats' those who would deny that justice or moderation really are excellences (220.9). Thus he does not suppose that the metaphysical premises used to defend his reading of Socrates' claims about the virtues or the soul could really be thought to beg the question against a person such as Thrasymachus or Callicles. Partly this is because he relies on the same sort of self-refutation argument that we glimpsed in Essay 2 of volume I.<sup>5</sup>

Another striking contrast with modern treatments of Book IV of the *Republic* emerges in Proclus' remarks on the audience for Plato's text.

<sup>4</sup> Mackie (1977). See Kosman (2007), 120–1 on the salience of this notion of proper functioning for moral philosophy more broadly.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. *in Remp.* I 26.19–30 and Baltzly, Finamore, and Miles (2018), 72–3

We tend to suppose that Socrates' arguments concerning the nature of justice in Book IV are accessible to undergraduates and can be assessed – at least to some extent – in isolation from the metaphysically loaded central books of the *Republic*. Proclus, by contrast, supposes that Socrates' definitions of the virtues are hard to grasp and are presented in that way intentionally. Speaking of the summary of civic virtues that begins at 431d, Proclus insists that Socrates presents these definitions in a way that is inaccessible (*abatos*, 228.7) to the many. His statement of the definitions of those virtues is indeed couched in a technical language of 'perfective dispositions' that is not found in Plato. It must be said, however, that these technical definitions are not obviously foreign to Plato's text in their meaning – only in their manner of expression. It is as if Proclus wanted to assure his audience that the real meaning of Plato's text was not something open to the ordinary reader. Essay 6 concluded with Proclus urging his audience not to disclose to the masses the hidden agreement of Plato's philosophy with the teachings of Homer (205.22–3). By making obscure what is in fact plain, Proclus continues the trope of secrecy.

## 2. LET'S GET METAPHYSICAL

In the remainder of this Introduction, we will highlight some of the ways in which Proclus appeals to metaphysical considerations, and in particular to the nature of the human soul as it emerges in the *Timaeus*, in his treatment of the arguments of Book IV. As Michele Abbate pointed out:

Metaphysics and theology (which in late Neoplatonism is strictly connected with metaphysical theory) are the true sources and reference points of Proclus' political speculation: in these two kinds of knowledge Proclus finds the paradigmatic and conceptual structures on the basis of which he deems it possible to elaborate a political theorization of some sort.<sup>6</sup>

The city–soul analogy developed in Books II–IV of Plato's dialogue is, of course, important for Proclus' reading of the text. But while contemporary interpreters prefer to assess Socrates' claims on the nature of justice principally in relation to the *Republic* alone, Proclus definitely reads against the modern grain by relating the *Republic* closely to the *Timaeus* and, in general, giving Socrates' ethical commonplaces a distinctly metaphysical twist.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Abbate (2006), 200.

<sup>7</sup> An interesting counter-example among modern readings of Book IV's account of justice comes from Kosman, who argues that Socrates' claims in Book IV of necessity

## 3. THE HUMAN SOUL AS 'MULTI-ETHNIC' STATE

The problem of the philosopher's descent back into the Cave (*Rep.* VII 519d) is one of long-standing in scholarship on the *Republic*. Why, given the fulfilment that the philosopher finds in his solitary contemplation of the Forms would he or she wish to do the hard work of governing the ideal city? Proclus finds a psychic counter-part to this question and identifies it as such (209.10). This emerges in his discussion of the distinction between the intrinsic and relational versions of the soul's virtues. When the reasoning part of the soul, considered in isolation from the other parts of the soul, lives the contemplative life, it engages in its own perfective activity. That is to say, considered in isolation, it lives in accordance with its essence – and thus lives well – when it does just this. Since virtues are features that allow a living thing to live well in accordance with its essence, reason manifests its *kath' auto* or intrinsic virtue in such a life. When the reasoning part rules over spirit and appetite, it manifests its relational or *pros ti* virtue.

The problem of the philosopher's descent into the Cave, viewed from the political vantage point, is obvious since it seems plausible that the philosopher could thrive alone. After all, the non-philosophers are not like him or her – they are alien to the philosopher's way of life. But because Proclus views the tripartite soul of the *Republic* in relation to the psychogony of the *Timaeus*, he immediately apprehends that the spirited and appetitive parts of the soul are similarly alien to the reasoning part. Indeed, Proclus seems to have regarded the three parts of the soul

involve a cosmic and metaphysical setting for their proper understanding. Though he does not refer to Proclus or any other Neoplatonist, in commenting on the fact that justice plays a role among the Forms at *Rep.* 500c Kosman writes as follows:

Think here, following the *Republic's* spatial metaphors, of the divided line of Book 6 as having both a vertical and a horizontal dimension. The vertical dimension is made explicit in Socrates' discussion, but the horizontal dimension is implied by the plurality of entities at any given level of the line. Justice may then be thought of as the ideal principle that governs the *downward* vector along this vertical dimension, a vector of imaging, but also of dispersion and exemplification, producing the diaspora of being whose upward direction is governed by *eros*, by the love that the phenomenal world has for its own true nature. As the horizontal dimension of the divided line is governed by principles of multiplicity and unification, so the vertical dimension evokes the twin themes of justice and love that properly divide and hold together the commonwealth of being.

(Kosman (2007), 131)

Perhaps the time is again ripe for Neoplatonically inflected readings of Plato's treatment of justice.



as themselves differing in their essences (207.9–11).<sup>8</sup> He regards one of them as the immortal product of the creative activity of the Demiurge, while the parts of the soul other than reason are mortal products of the activities of the younger gods (*Tim.* 42d–e with 234.25–30). Given this different ‘parentage’ it is plausible to see these psychic parts in terms of the same independence that individual persons have, and from this vantage point the problem of the philosopher’s descent into the Cave has a parallel within the soul itself. Why should reason manifest anything other than its intrinsic virtue in the life of contemplation? This is just the problem of the philosopher’s descent into the Cave juxtaposed to the soul of the individual.

At the same time, Proclus is also keen to stress that the yoking together of the rational and irrational parts of the soul is natural (209.2): if reason is a member of an inner *polis* containing citizens of quite different descent, this ‘multi-ethnic state’ (as it were) is in no way contrary to nature. Here too the *Timaeus* is the guiding vision. The multiplication of the intelligible cosmos into the visible one similarly involves a movement from unity and purity to plurality and impurity. This just is the nature of divine beneficence. Higher principles that proceed into lower orders of being imitate that beneficence by the exercise of providence over secondary natures combined with reversion upon their own higher causes (via reversion upon themselves). The metaphysics of emanation means that the irrational parts of the soul, while they are substances, are not – strictly speaking – souls. The rational soul is soul, while the irrational kinds of soul are images or *eidōla* of soul.<sup>9</sup>

The distinction between the virtues of the parts of the soul considered in isolation and their relational virtues finds its home in this notion of procession and reversion. The civic virtues that are the subject of the *Republic* on the Neoplatonic reading are precisely virtues that the psychic parts exercise in their relations to one another. But the purificatory virtues of the soul are those that reason exercises on its own

<sup>8</sup> Perkams (2006) reads this as the claim that the three parts are *different substances* and argues that, in this regard, he differs from his Neoplatonic predecessors who treated the human soul as a single substance with multiple powers. This innovation on Proclus’ part is arguably in tension with Plato’s own views since Plato tends to describe the parts of the soul as *eidē* – forms or aspects – rather than as substances. For some qualifications to Perkams’ ‘three substances’ claim, see MacIsaac (2009), 123 n. 27. One should also bear in mind that Proclus did not take the spirited and appetitive parts of the soul to be themselves *souls* in the same manner that the rational soul is. They are rather *eidōla* or images of the rational soul; cf. Opsomer (2006).

<sup>9</sup> *Plat. Theol.* III 23.21–3 Καὶ ὅλος πολλαχοῦ δηλὸς ἐστὶ καὶ ὁ Πλάτων ψυχὴν τὴν λογικὴν εἶναι τιθέμενος, τὰς δὲ ἄλλας εἰδῶλα ψυχῶν. For the complete account of the irrational soul, including the vegetative or growth principle see Opsomer (2006).

behalf, to remove it from the reach of the passions, while the theoretic virtues are those involved in its reversion upon its higher causes in intellect.<sup>10</sup> Given the cosmic backdrop of Proclus' theory of emanation, the presence of the rational soul in the same inner *polis* with its irrational subordinates – spirit and reason – is not unnatural. The exercise of civic virtue in relation to the other members of this *polis* is an activity corresponding to procession and to providential care over secondary natures. This virtue must be combined with the purificatory and theoretic virtues so that the flourishing human soul can mimic Socrates, who simultaneously exercises *philanthrôpeia*, while never losing his connection to his higher causes. Socrates is, in this regard, imitating the double activity of the Demiurge who creates the visible cosmos but never becomes so involved in it as to depart from his contemplation of the intelligible one.

This perspective on the distinction between the rational and irrational soul is used to resolve another problem that Proclus raises. The virtue of temperance or self-control (*sôphrosynê*) is shared by both the spirited and the appetitive parts of the soul insofar as both are subject to the authority of reason. But spirit, unlike appetite, assists reason in governing appetite. So while appetite is merely subject to authority, both reason and spirit exercise authority. Why do reason and spirit, then, not share a virtue *qua* rulers as spirit and appetite do *qua* ruled? In addition to noting the different status of reason (immortal, product of the Demiurge) and spirit (mortal, product of the younger gods), Proclus also differentiates them in terms of the metaphysics of reversion. The measure or propriety (*to metron*) that forms the core of temperance has its origins in reason. Reason gives its own measure to itself, and in virtue of that also gives measure to spirit. In the triad of remaining, procession, and reversion, then, the measure of temperance remains in reason, proceeds through spirit, but appetite reverts upon reason through spirit. So while both the reasoning part and the spirited part exercise authority or rule, they do so in quite different ways and spirit's rule is derivative upon the authority of reason in ways that reason's rule is not. Hence these parts do not share a virtue *qua* rulers, while spirit and appetite do share a virtue *qua* ruled.

At other points in the Essay, Proclus combines attention to the *Republic* with attention to Plato's other dialogues, as well as considerations drawn from other sacred texts, to resolve philosophical puzzles. Scholarship on the argument of *Republic* IV has long been occupied with the success of Socrates' argument for the distinctness of the parts

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Olympiodorus in *Pbd* §8.2.

of the soul.<sup>11</sup> Interpreters have objected to the Principle of Conflict (436b), as well as to Socrates' assertion that, for instance, thirst and the desire not to drink really are opposed in such a way as to be covered by the Principle of Conflict.<sup>12</sup> But there is also a different worry that one might have about the argument for psychic division at 436b–439e. If it works, might it not work too well – revealing the soul to be composed of more parts than merely the three that Socrates lists?<sup>13</sup> Proclus considers the question of whether money-loving and pleasure-loving parts of the soul might be implied by the general conflict between the pursuit of wealth and the pursuit of pleasure (225.4, ff.). Proclus sets out the dilemma for Socrates' argument in a way that shows that he had some awareness of the issues that moderns have located. It cannot be that we have a basis for positing a psychic division everywhere that two desires cannot be simultaneously satisfied. It is indeed true that you can't always get what you want, but in most cases that seems to be a fact about the contingencies of the objects of the desire, not the nature of the desiring subject. Socrates' divisions into the reasoning, spirited, and appetitive parts track differences in motivational structure – not merely contingencies about the simultaneous satisfaction of desires. These differences in motivational structure are exhibited in the subsequent catalogue of personality types in *Republic* VIII and IX. The general object of motivation for, say, the timocratic person is victory and honour. If the pole vault competition is scheduled at the same time as the swimming event so that he cannot compete in both, his desire to win in the pole vault and his desire not to compete in the pole vault do not show that there are further psychic parts at issue: the incompatibility lies in the world, not in the agent's motivational structure. But Proclus' examples for the 'further splitting' objection are not like that. Gluttony refers to a relatively unified motivation that gives rise to an identifiable pattern of behaviour. Being miserly is another such unified motivation and those motivations seem to be regularly in conflict – a conflict that Proclus illustrates nicely in his remark:

On the one hand, due to their gluttony, they are impelled to provide for themselves whatever will satisfy their passion. But then, due to their avarice, they cry out for the opposite, saying 'Don't buy it – a frightful expenditure of money!'

The question, Proclus says, is not merely whether these patterns of motivation conflict, but whether they conflict in their essence. If they

<sup>11</sup> The literature is vast. See the bibliography in Barney, Brennan, and Brittain (2012).

<sup>12</sup> The classic statement of this complaint is perhaps Crombie (1962–3), vol. 1, 365–8. See also Stalley (1975).

<sup>13</sup> Annas (1981), 138–41.

differ in their essence, then this will make the parts of the soul four in number rather than three. If, on the other hand, they don't differ in their essence and yet they can be in conflict, then why suppose that the other psychic conflicts illustrate an essential difference between, say, reason and spirit?

Proclus' response to this puzzle initially appeals to other parts of the *Republic*. Anyone who supposes that there is a problem about the conflict between love of pleasure and love of money fails to attend properly to Socrates' description of the appetitive part of the soul as a 'many-headed beast' (588c). This description reveals appetite's proximity to corporeal nature which is 'completely and utterly plural and divisible'. Compared to body, then, even appetite is a unity. Proclus calls it 'both one and many' since it is more unified than body, but less unified than the reasoning part which, thanks to its proximity to intellect, is more indivisible than the other parts of the soul (225.19–25).<sup>14</sup> Thus an application of the doctrine of mean terms positions appetite along a continuum of unification that leaves it just prior to body. It should then come as no surprise that it can encompass conflicting motivations like the love of money and the love of pleasure in its baggy and diverse essence. But Proclus' justification for his solution to the puzzle does not end with this use of the doctrine of mean terms. He goes on to align the three parts of the soul with the triad: Existence–Power–Intellect. It seems likely that this is a variation on a Neoplatonic interpretation of the Chaldean Oracles that attributes to the Oracles a triad: Father–Power–Intellect.<sup>15</sup> If Proclus' audience recognise his introduction of Existence–Power–Intellect as a legitimate variation on the wisdom of the Chaldeans, then his solution to the puzzle is further affirmed by their authority. In any case, he goes on to utilise this triad to show that appetite, like matter, is the product of only the most general and highest member of the triad: Existence. This explains both why the appetite has a love of the body and how the plural nature of that which it loves explains the plurality of motivations that are encompassed within it. Yet, in spite of this plurality, appetite is one part or faculty since ideally its object of desire is unitary: the care of the body. Conflicts, like that between the love of pleasure and the love of money, arise because of the

<sup>14</sup> The idea that something can be indivisible to a greater or lesser degree depending upon its relation to other things is common to Proclus' general approach to intermediates. Soul in general is, in his understanding of the *Timaeus*, both generated and ungenerated. It is ungenerated in relation to individual corporeal things since it exists forever, but it is generated in relation to Intellect since it cannot receive the procession from Eternity in full and consequently lives discursively.

<sup>15</sup> Majercik (2001), 278.

two-fold nature of this care. On the one hand, the natural and correct love of pleasure aims at the return of the body to its natural condition – what the *Philebus* equates with pleasure. On the other hand, there are things that the body requires in order to be in that natural condition. These are the correct objects for the love of possessions. Conflict emerges only when the appetitive part goes wrong in the pursuit of its natural object and comes to value the means to the body's preservation as if they were ends in themselves or, alternatively, comes to value the pleasure that results from the return of the body to its natural condition as an end in itself when it is, in fact, only a by-product (*parakolouthêma*) of the natural condition.<sup>16</sup>

#### 4. THE UNITY OF THE SOUL – TIMAEAN PARALLELS

Given the diverse nature of the parts of the soul as we have considered them thus far, one might well wonder what makes the human soul one in any sense at all. One answer emerges from Proclus' investigation of why there are only three parts of the human soul and this answer again illustrates the way in which the psychological views of *Republic* IV are embedded in the context of the *Timaeus*.<sup>17</sup> In effect, Proclus utilises the same strategy to answer the question 'Why are there only three parts to the soul?' as the *Timaeus* uses to answer the question, 'Why are there four elements?' In the *Timaeus*, we find the inclusion of fire and earth in the universe justified by appeal to the fact that it is both visible and tangible. But if it is to be a unified, three-dimensional thing, then there must be two intermediate elements to form a geometric proportion between the extreme terms. In his commentary, Proclus transposes into a physical key his preferred method for establishing a geometric proportion between cube numbers.<sup>18</sup> Consider the  $2 \times 2 \times 2$  as a figure with sides. To establish the intermediate means between it and  $3 \times 3 \times 3$  we take two sides from one extreme and one from the other extreme (i.e.  $2 \times 2 \times 3$ ) and then do the same for the mean closer to the other extreme (i.e.  $2 \times 3 \times 3$ ). This yields the continuous geometric proportion  $8 : 12 : 18 : 27$  which preserves the epitritos or  $4:3$  ratio. To transpose this method into a physical setting, Proclus assigns each element three powers (rather than the two powers associated with the elements in Aristotle's physical theory). Fire is thus tenuous, sharp, and easily moved, while earth is dense,

<sup>16</sup> See the lucid discussion of this passage in van Riel (2000), 122.

<sup>17</sup> See MacIsaac (2009), 127–8, who makes the following points clearly and forcefully. We have learned much from MacIsaac's paper.

<sup>18</sup> This technique emerges again in Proclus' derivation of the marriage number in Essay 13.

blunt, and moved with difficulty. The intermediate elements of air and fire are established as intermediates, with each sharing two powers with the element closest to it:

Fire	tenuous	sharp	easily moved
Air	tenuous	blunt	easily moved
Water	dense	blunt	easily moved
Earth	dense	blunt	moved with difficulty

In the case of the soul, the extreme terms are taken to be the faculty of reason and the body. Just as air and water provide the terms of a continuous geometric proportion between the opposed elements of fire and earth, so too the spirited and appetitive parts of the soul bind reason to the body. A second table reveals the structural parallel with the four elements that compose the cosmos:

Reason	indivisible	having desire	intellectual
Spirit	indivisible	having desire	lacking intellect
Appetite	plural in form/parts	having desire	lacking intellect
Body	having many parts	lacking desire	lacking intellect

Because the immortal rational soul is one of the extreme terms, while the non-psychic body is the other, we get three and only three parts of the soul.

Now one might justly complain that there is something a bit *ad hoc* about Proclus' solution. Why is the binding between reason and the body rather than between reason and appetite? After all, in the parallel case from the *Timaeus*, all the things bound by the proportion are themselves the same in kind: they are all material elements. Moreover, one might protest that while it makes sense to regard the elements fire and earth as cubes which require two intermediate terms, there is no obvious reason why reason should be defined as analogous to a cube. It, unlike the body, is not extended in three dimensions. But setting aside these complaints, we do meet with an answer to the question that obviously arises from the picture of the inner *polis* as a multi-ethnic one, populated by the immortal rational soul and the mortal, irrational souls of spirit and appetite. This inner *polis* has exactly the same kind of unity that the visible cosmos has. It is bound together by what the *Timaeus* calls 'the fairest of bonds' (31c) – geometric proportion. Moreover, this

is just what we would expect given the microcosm/macrocosm relation between the ideal city and the visible cosmos, on the one hand, and the human soul and the ideal city on the other.

## 5. CONCLUSION

This handful of examples gives a sense of the way in which Proclus' reading of *Republic* IV embeds Socrates' arguments in a broader cosmic and metaphysical context. Does Proclus succeed in incorporating the arguments of *Republic* IV into his metaphysical system and his own theory of the soul so as to produce a coherent whole? Commenting on the fact that Proclus' taxonomy of the powers of the rational soul includes only a doxastic and noetic power – but not a dianoetic one – MacIsaac writes:

In fact, I think, all of Proclus' systematic taxonomies of the soul's parts are like this. They give the impression of being complete, but should be read as mutually complementary. In other words, no one analysis captures exhaustively all the complexity of the soul, and our understanding of it comes rather from generating complementary discursive accounts taken from different perspectives. I think further that this sort of complementarity of accounts is derived from the inherent partiality of *dianoia*, in Proclus, and applies to his accounts of other parts of his system.

(MacIsaac (2009), 134)

Now, we agree entirely with MacIsaac that the appearance of Proclus' systematicity is often not answered by an underlying reality. But what is the explanation for this fact and what significance does it hold for us? MacIsaac's diagnosis relates to the inherent partiality of *dianoia*. But how should we take 'in Proclus' in the last line of the passage just quoted? There seem to be at least three possibilities:

- 1 Proclus regarded a complete and systematic account of the psychic (and other) realities he was discussing to be beyond the limits of discursive thought. Thus he would have been untroubled by incompleteness and gaps, and would have relied on multiple, complementary accounts from different perspectives.
- 2 Though Proclus himself did not realise this, it is a consequence of his theoretical commitments that no complete and systematic account of the psychic (and other) realities he discussed can be produced in discursive thought or language. So provided that his discursive practice was consistent with his theoretical commitments, we should expect no more from him than multiple, complementary accounts from different perspectives.

- 3 The psychic (and other) realities really are beyond the limits of discursive thought. Thus it is no surprise that Proclus – talented though he might have been – was unable to produce more than multiple complementary accounts from different perspectives.

We suspect that MacIsaac's position is either 1 or 2 – or perhaps agnosticism between them.<sup>19</sup> But differentiating these possibilities affords us an opportunity to clarify the hypothesis that we introduced in volume I. There we noted that the purported point of the teaching context from which our commentaries emerged was the inculcation of the various gradations of virtues that were aligned with the Platonic curriculum. But we asked, 'How might the ancient Platonists have regarded those virtues such that the production and consumption of these commentaries is a means through which they might be acquired?' We hypothesised that in fact the possession of these virtues consisted in the capacity for what we called 'Platonic literacy' – an improvisational ability, parallel to late antique *paideia*, to interpret all things through the lens of Platonic images and ideas. We urged that instead of seeing Platonic commentary-writing as system building, we should instead see it like playing jazz. Different performances can be different, since they aim at demonstrating an improvisational ability rather than command over a fixed composition. Even so, some solos work or suit the context of what is passed to you by the previous soloist and what is given by the jazz standard that you are performing.

Did the ancient Platonists have this conception of Platonic literacy in mind? Did they equate its possession with the possession of civic, purificatory, and contemplative virtues? We say 'Probably not'. Platonic literacy as the product of the teaching and commentary context is our explanation for the character of what was produced. It does not represent the conscious aims of the participants. It is, however, consistent with some of their philosophical claims and much of their surrounding intellectual context. The 'multiple complementary accounts from different perspectives' that we have likened to jazz solos are performed by writers who do suppose that non-discursive intellectual insight or *nous* outruns the possibilities of discursive thought or *dianoia*. Moreover, all our soloists were themselves beneficiaries of the gentleman's education: *paideia* was something they knew and valued. So it is not implausible that they should have regarded mastery of Platonism in terms similar to the mastery of *paideia*. But while mastery of Platonism was thought to be the pathway to the virtues, it seems implausible that the performative

<sup>19</sup> MacIsaac goes on: 'Proclus is paradoxically an extremely systematic thinker, but one whose theory of philosophy precludes a completed discursive system, whether or not he himself realised this.'



ability that we have called ‘Platonic literacy’ was regarded by them as the very essence of the various gradations of the virtues. Rather, we hypothesise that, from their point of view, the capacity that Proclus demonstrates in his readings of Plato was rather like the Christian view of the sacraments. Platonic literacy is ‘an outward sign of an inner condition’. This hypothesis gains credibility when we reflect that inclusion with the pantheon of truly great leaders of the school was conditioned by the possession of recognised Platonic literacy.<sup>20</sup>

This sacramental analogy is not merely a quaint tic exhibited by ancient Platonists. In fact, it affords us a useful vantage point for twenty-first-century philosophers to see ourselves, just as we suggested in volume I. Philosophy shares with many STEM fields the ‘cult of the genius’. That is to say, in job talks, interviews, seminars, and corridor conversations professional philosophers have long taken other philosophers’ impromptu performances as signs of an underlying philosophical talent – a kind of intellectual virtue. These outwards signs of an inner condition are, as feminist philosophers have pointed out, not gender neutral.<sup>21</sup> (Or at least they are not gender neutral in the ways that the dominant discourses in anglophone philosophy have historically constructed masculinity and femininity out of the underlying matter of sexual difference.) So if there is a confusion between what we think philosophical training inculcates or enhances – philosophical genius – and the behaviours that we take as proxies for that inner condition, then perhaps we are not so radically different from the ancient Platonists after all.

<sup>20</sup> Reflect for a moment upon poor, hapless Marinus who burned his commentary on the *Parmenides* when it did not measure up to the standard of Proclus.

<sup>21</sup> Leslie et al. (2015)

## ESSAY 7

### *Proclus the Successor on the demonstrations in the fourth book of the Republic on the three parts of the human soul and the virtues that are in them.*

5

#### <I. PRELIMINARY REMARKS: 206.6–207.13>

##### <A. On virtues strictly speaking: 206.6–13>

How Socrates in the *Republic* arranged the account concerning the virtues, after he isolated both the political classes and the parts of the soul, is itself something that we might learn once we have first sought for ourselves an answer to this question: ‘What is the distinctive feature of every virtue?’ I do not use the word ‘virtue’ homonymously in the sense in which it is customarily applied even to things that are lifeless, as when one talks about the virtue of an implement or some such thing, but I mean instead when the term is used strictly.<sup>22</sup> In this sense we will inevitably be speaking about something that relates to its vital character and the way that it perfects its life, since it is the cause of things going well for those in which it is present rather than of their existence.<sup>23</sup> But since life is two-fold – on the one hand cognitive, on the other hand appetitive – virtue too is something that perfects both the appetitive and the cognitive forms of life.<sup>24</sup> For this reason it is necessary for virtue to

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<sup>22</sup> Note the contrast with *Rep.* 353a–b. There a pruning knife is used to illustrate the notion of an *ergon* or function. Each thing with a specific function also has a virtue. Hence Plato seems committed to the idea that we can speak of the function of a pruning knife. Presumably Proclus would regard this use as not strictly correct.

<sup>23</sup> A parallel distinction between perfective and – shall we say – ‘substantive’ forms occurs again later at 270.13–271.11: there are forms that give an existence (*hyparxis*) to things and others which are perfective of them (*teleiōtikos*). In Essay 11 Proclus uses this distinction to set up his treatment of the different kinds of good: the form of the good presides over perfective forms and the Good beyond being presides over forms that generate the being of objects. In this light, we decline to supply ‘merely’ in 206.15 as Festugière does: ‘non pas seulement de l’être (του εἶναι)’. Rather, virtue does not bring anything into being, but does perfect the way of living of creatures that already exist.

<sup>24</sup> Similarly in his discussion of kinds of form at 1.270.13–20, Proclus gives ‘the good and the beautiful and the just and any forms of virtue’ as examples of perfective form, but also

be neither one nor more than one, but for all of them to be the same in form, not having in this way been divided from what is single, as the *homoiomeres* are divided from one another, differing only in quantity, but rather they are plural and dissimilar.<sup>25</sup> For necessarily, as the underlying subjects are, so too are the perfections that belong to them. In as much as the underlying subjects differ in form, the virtues must also differ in form. But if the underlying subjects are the same in form, then their virtue is also one in form.<sup>26</sup> For if it is the case that for one substance (*ousia*) there is one perfection, then either the cause of existence for existent things would be the same as the cause of their being in good condition (i.e. to the extent that [the cause] bestows existence [*simpliciter*], so too will it also bestow existing *well*) or else they are different. [In the latter case] one cause will give proportionately to the other, that is, the leading principle (*chorêgos*) of being in good condition will give proportionately to that which gives being *simpliciter*, since it aims, of course, at the worthy state of each thing.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, it is necessary that virtue is not single where the substance of which it is the virtue is not single. It is for this reason too that Socrates distinguished the three classes in the city (the guardian class, the auxiliary class, and the workers' class) prior to showing what the different species of virtues that are present in the best constitution are. Prior to firmly establishing the virtues by

'health and strength'. It is presumably this latter group to which he alludes here when he refers to virtues which perfect the appetitive rather than the cognitive form of life.

<sup>25</sup> This rather opaque remark seems to allude to the discussion at *Protagoras* 329d, ff. on the unity of the virtues. There Socrates offers Protagoras the unity of the distinct parts of the face or the unity of a sample of gold as two analogies. Gold is, of course, an example of something that most ancients took to be a homoiomerous substance. Compare Plato *Prot.* 329d6–8 ὥσπερ τὰ τοῦ χρυσοῦ μόρια οὐδὲν διαφέρει τὰ ἕτερα τῶν ἐτέρων, ἀλλήλων καὶ τοῦ ὅλου, ἀλλ' ἢ μέγθει καὶ σμικρότητι; with Proclus' ὡς τὰ ὁμοιομερῆ διαιρεῖται ἀπ' ἀλλήλων, τῷ ποσῷ διαφέροντα μόνον. It is unknown how the Neoplatonists interpreted the argument that Socrates provides against Protagoras' response to the choices presented to him.

<sup>26</sup> The next two essays concern the sameness of virtues between men and women. Proclus argues that since male and female humans are the same in form, there are not distinct virtues for men and women.

<sup>27</sup> Proclus here contrasts two different understandings of how a living subject achieves its own excellence. Either a) the cause of existence and the cause of being in good condition (i.e. the substantive and the perfective cause) will be the same, so that being the best horse will involve simply receiving the most of this one, united cause of horseness or b) the cause of existence and the cause of being in good condition are distinct, but are proportionate to each other (so that a good horse receives the cause of being a horse, and secondarily but proportionately receives good-horse-ness from the separate, perfective cause). Despite taking the trouble to elaborate this distinction, Proclus' broader point here will stand: since different subjects (*hypokeimena*) have different perfections, there will be different perfections for the three parts of the soul.

10 analogy in a single soul he also showed that the three parts of the soul differ essentially (*kat' ousian*) from one another (Reason, Spirit, and Appetite) since he understood that where there are differences among the underlying subjects, there are corresponding permutations among their perfections (*teleiôtês*). It is for this reason that there are many virtues which are different in form (*anomoidês*).

<B. On intrinsic and relational virtues: 207.14–210.6>

15 These then are things that must be assumed in advance, as I said. But let us add to these, if you wish, the following things which will make our approach to the matter at hand easier. The perfection and the activity of each of the beings is one thing when it is considered in itself, but something else when considered in relation to another. In the same way, the existence (*hyparxis*) of each thing is different from the relation (*schesis*) of that same thing to another. After all, the perfection of man is one thing, but the perfection of man-who-is-a-master is another, just as man is not the same thing as master.<sup>28</sup> Nor is it the same thing to view the soul *simpliciter* and to view it ruling the body. This is clear from what Plato himself says in the *Timaeus*, for the soul that employs exercises that are more intense than the body [can bear] is not to be praised as a ruler of the body, since it destroys that which is ruled.<sup>29</sup>

25 Yet when the soul practises (*askein*) the things that pertain to itself, it doubtless achieves its function even if the living being [of which it is the soul] should appear to be composed of things that are not symmetrical with one another. Therefore it is not the same thing to consider the perfection of each thing in itself and to consider its relational perfection. Nor, therefore, will independence (*autopragia*) be grasped by us in

30 the same manner when we grasp it in itself and when we grasp it as [it pertains to the role of] ruler or subject, for ruling and being ruled are types of relations. But nothing prevents something from producing the same effect, not as ruler or as subject of rule, but rather as possessing

208 a certain essence intrinsically and an activity consequent upon the essence allotted to it.

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. Aristotle, *Cat.* 7a23–b9

<sup>29</sup> At *Tim.* 88a, Plato describes a powerful soul that is filled with anger and stronger than the body that it animates. Such a soul agitates the body from within and infects it with diseases. Of course Plato also goes on to describe another powerful soul which is so consumed with the desire for learning that it wastes the body. Presumably Proclus would regard this soul as a successful soul, but not a successful ruler of the body in its care.

For example, when the rational [part] in us lives in a pure and contemplative manner,<sup>30</sup> it performs its own proper function, since it is natural for it to live in this manner in accordance with its essence. But it does not thereby perform the role of ruling over the irrational parts [of the soul], since there is nothing beneficial for them in reason being active in relation to itself. In any case, Socrates has correctly shown that 10  
in every case, the craft of ruling provides the good to the one who is the subject of rule. As a consequence, when the rational part provides the good only to itself, by purifying itself and seeking itself, it does not possess the way of life of that which rules. Thus it is also the case that when the spirited [part of the soul] does the things that pertain to spirit – as 15  
when it is moved solely by vengeful desire for inflicting harms – it does not maintain its relation as the subject of reason, but instead does that which alone belongs to spirit (for this is the function of spirit: to desire to repay pain for pain) and is not active in the manner of one who listens to reason. The same goes for the appetitive part too. When it lives 20  
in accordance with its own nature, it desires pleasure in an insatiable manner (*aplêstôs*) (for this is the function of appetite: to love not just some pleasure, but all pleasure) and not as subject to rule by the very thing that has been appointed to moderate desire. One might say that each kind among the three [parts of the soul] acts in this manner when it does only what belongs to it, as if the principle that pertains to it was 25  
not ranked alongside the remaining ones.<sup>31</sup> But since all these things have been yoked together with one another and constitute a single life it is necessary to distinguish the relational activity (*skêtikê energeia*) of all of them and thus to see both the virtue and the vice that belongs to each one. It is [necessary to define] this disposition as political virtue, since it is such as to perfect the relational life of the parts of the soul. 30  
[And we must define] the opposite of this as the vicious disposition that destroys the vital relation that these parts naturally have to one another. 209

<sup>30</sup> οἷον τὸ λογικὸν τὸ ἐν ἡμῖν καθαρτικῶς ζῶν <καὶ> θεωρητικῶς. We translate Kroll's text as it is printed and very conservatively. However, given that the cathartic and theoretic virtues are the gradations above the civic ones, it is tempting to read this remark in light of the scale of virtues. If that were warranted, it would be perhaps better to insert ἢ rather than καὶ. One might then translate more freely: 'lives at the level of purificatory or theoretic [virtue].'

<sup>31</sup> ὡς τῶν λοιπῶν οὐδὲ τὴν ἀρχὴν αὐτῶ συντεταγμένων. Festugière translates: 'si les autres ne lui avaient été même pas tout subordonnées.' But this seems to give the wrong sense to τὴν ἀρχὴν since reason too fails in its relational role when it pursues its own ends to the exclusion of ruling the others, yet it is not subject to their rule. Perhaps it is better to see τὴν ἀρχὴν as the principle for each of the psychic parts in the sense given above. Reason's principle or intrinsic aim is purification and knowing itself, while the spirited part's principle is revenge, and appetite's is pleasure.

5 Taking our impetus from this point, it is necessary to see that in each of the political classes the kind of life is two-fold: the one intrinsic, the other relational. In a corresponding way, it is also necessary to see that in the case of the virtue or the vice that pertains to these [classes] it is just the same.

10 So let us suppose the guardian to be this sort of person: one who lives for himself, contemplating existent things and ascending by means of intellectual visions (*periôpê*) as far as the Good. Now this person, insofar as he is a human being, realises an activity that is proper to himself, but has surrendered the way of life that pertains to ruling. It is for this reason indeed that Socrates does not permit him to remain up above, but brings him back down again to the providential care of the city in order that he should truly be a guardian and stand in a relation [to the city], forsaking the non-relational life up there (520a).<sup>32</sup> Similarly, let us suppose an auxiliary who pays no heed to the status of the rulers, on the grounds that he is lord over weapons, and instead rushes into everything as luck would have it and uses his power in an unrestrained way. This man fulfils, of course, his appropriate activity as a soldier (because it is his task to make war), but not yet as someone who is a subject, for it is necessary for the one who is a subject that he look to the thought of the one who is the ruler. When he follows his leader, the auxiliary maintains the virtue that belongs to someone who is a subject. But when he rebels against the ruler, he destroys the relational virtue [of the subject]. Now let us suppose the final-stage businessman who lives for himself and occupies himself [solely] with business – buying or selling and turning his energies simply to increasing his wealth. Surely this person too accomplishes the function that belongs to him, insofar as he is what he is said to be, a businessman, and does not thereby have the virtue or vice that pertains to one who is subject to authority. But if he should come to be part of a political arrangement, then he would have the status of one who is subject to authority. In this [situation] he would thereby live in a relational manner and if, in accordance with this relation, he follows those who are in charge and conducts business in accordance with their intention, in the way that they have defined the manner and quantity of business, he will have the virtue that belongs to a businessman who is subject to authority. But if he is disobedient toward the rulers and does not keep to their rules (*dogma*), then he will be a dishonest (*mochthêros*) businessman insofar as he is a subject.

<sup>32</sup> Proclus does not discuss the return of the philosopher/guardian after the vision of the Good in his commentary on the Cave in Essay 12. See further our Introduction to this essay.

Therefore the appropriate function within the political classes will be two-fold – the one intrinsic, the other relational – as in the case of the parts of the soul. 5

<C. On the priority of the virtues' internal activity: 210.6–211.3>

If there are in both [i.e. souls and political classes] ruling and subject parts, as well as virtues and vices, then this is something that it is necessary to consider, how the virtues and vices of some stand in relation to those of others, and when we have considered that to say that the virtues or vices among the parts of the soul pre-exist those among the political classes and serve as paradigms for the latter. For when each [of the virtues or vices] within are active, they arrange the parts of the soul for better or for worse. Proceeding externally and advancing into deeds, these activities fill the political classes with order or disorder. It is for this reason that Socrates correctly makes the transition from the virtues and vices in the soul to those in whole cities, since he passes to what is more familiar. After all, it is not possible to know all the internal dispositions of souls nor the activities that remain internal to them other than through the activities that go forth externally. 10 15 20

This is therefore clear: The guardian who rules over the auxiliaries acts externally in a manner that imitates the internal relation of reason ruling over the spirited part, while the auxiliary who rules over the class of businessmen imitates in his external activity the interior rule of the spirited part with respect to appetite. Thus all these [kinds of rule] are relations – both the psychic kinds of rule and the political ones – but those that are external are imitations of the ones that are internal, and are activities that are secondary to those that are primarily effective (*prôtourgōs*). The true art of politics concerns these [internal relations], since it is the art of ordering relations of rule and subordination among [internal parts] each<sup>33</sup> of which exists in a way that is primary (*prôtōs*). Just as the political classes are images of these [internal psychic parts] so too the former art is an image of the latter. Or rather it is a single disposition in its essence<sup>34</sup> that possesses a double activity – one that orders internal relations of subordination and rule, the other that orders external ones. 25 30 211

<sup>33</sup> We follow Festugière in deleting the comma after κοσμητική in line 28. The subsequent πρῶτως ἑκατέρων ὄντων clearly describes the ἀρχόντων καὶ ἀρχομένων in the soul that the true art of politics orders.

<sup>34</sup> Kroll's list of emendations in vol. 2 recommends οὐσία for οὐσα in line 1.

<D. On the number of the virtues: 211.4–217.5>

<1. *The four virtues in the soul: 211.4–215.27*>

Since these things have already been distinguished, let us now consider  
 5 how we may grant an entrance to all the virtues, these being four in  
 number, and surely we will make this very thing clear for those who  
 long to learn, that they *are* in fact four in number. Now there are  
 indeed three parts (for it is from this fact that we must start) and they  
 do not have equal status, but rather one is closely akin to intellect and  
 one pertains naturally to the body, while the third has been positioned  
 10 between these two. That which is closely related to intellect only rules  
 [i.e. is not also ruled], of course, by its nature. Thus it is reason, whose  
 nature it is to understand intellect, that is a thing naturally akin to intel-  
 lect. On the other hand, what pertains to the body is fit only for being  
 ruled according to its proper status. But it is the appetitive part that is  
 15 like this, since it hungers for corporeal needs just as reason does for  
 intellectual goods. The spirited part of the soul is simultaneously ruler  
 and subject of rule. This is because, on the one hand, the spirited part is  
 irrational (or at any rate, it also belongs to irrational animals and lacks  
 any portion of understanding, as does the appetitive part) and naturally  
 in need of being ruled by that which is akin to intellect. But, on the  
 20 other hand, because it always stands with reason when appetite is in  
 conflict with reason (since spirit is more closely related to reason), it  
 is more bound to rule than the former – appetite having been placed a  
 further remove from reason and being something that especially tends  
 to undergo passions along with the body. While appetite *consorts* closely  
 with the body and would never desert the body through its own ac-  
 25 tions, the spirited part frequently holds the body and the life that goes  
 along with it in *contempt*, since it yearns for some other object of desire  
 which does not belong to the body.<sup>35</sup>

Therefore, since there are three of these, one of them ought solely to  
 rule, as intellect does. Another ought solely to be ruled, as the body is.  
 30 The third ought simultaneously to rule and to be ruled in accordance  
 with its status as a mean term between extremes. The things that do the  
 ruling are of course two, though one does so in a primary manner, the  
 212 other in a secondary way. There are also two things that are subjects of  
 rule by the same line of argument. It is therefore necessary, of course,

<sup>35</sup> Festugière notes the alliterative contrast between ἡ μὲν περιπτύσσεται τὸ σῶμα ... ὃ δὲ περιπτύει πολλάκις τὸ σῶμα and regrets that French does not afford a parallel. A more literal English translation would be that appetite is *wrapped up* in body, while the spirited part *splits* upon it, but ‘consorts’ and ‘holds in contempt’ sacrifices some literal meaning for the sake of preserving the alliteration.



for the one<sup>36</sup> that solely rules to have<sup>37</sup> a single virtue that perfects its ruling relation. It is also necessary that the one that rules in a secondary way and is ruled in a primary way must possess a two-fold virtue that perfects its two relations (for just as the perfections differ in the case of different existences, so too do perfections of different relations). Finally, that which is solely ruled has a single perfecting virtue. Since reason is of course the one which has been shown to be solely fitted to rule, it has for its ruling virtue *intelligence* (*phronêsis*) in accordance with which it determines both for itself and for the other [psychic parts] the limits of actions. Appetite, on the other hand, since it is solely suited for being ruled will have the virtue of *moderation* (*sôphrosynê*) through which it moderates its own desires when it reverts upon reason. This very stretching out toward reason is something that it grasps thanks to reason because of habitual exercise and education. Finally spirit, which has been shown to be naturally suited to rule and to be ruled, will have as its ruling virtue *courage*, through which it humbles the appetitive part and preserves its own invulnerability to the blows of desire. But spirit will also have moderation insofar as it is subject to being ruled and to the extent that, because it has been educated, it reaches for the measures established by reason.

Now surely if it is reason – since it is to both [the other parts] ruler and cause of their reversion upon it and of their becoming subject to persuasion<sup>38</sup> – that contains the first principle of the measure it gives to those [other parts], then this would be moderation: originating from reason, it finds its completion in appetite through the intermediary of the spirited part. It is thus also a harmony that runs throughout (*dia pasôn*) since it is composed from three terms: reason, spirit and

<sup>36</sup> δεῖ δὲ οὖν τὸ μὲν ἐν μόνῳ ἄρχον μίαν ἔχειν ἀρετὴν. Kroll brackets ἐν in line 3, and Festugière questions this on the ground that Proclus writes τὸ μὲν ἑσχατον τοῖς δυοῖ, τὸ δὲ μέσον τῷ πρὸ αὐτοῦ ἐνί at 228.16, indicating – as Festugière supposes – that Reason is a One that is opposed to the two other, irrational parts of the soul. We grant that τὸ μὲν ἐν, viewed in isolation, is somewhat odd. (What does ‘one’ add that the singular τὸ μὲν does not already convey?) Nonetheless, 228.16 is a long way from this context. Moreover, each of the two remaining parts is introduced merely with τὸ δὲ with no suggestion that they collectively constitute anything like an indefinite or irrational dyad opposed to the unity of Reason. So while we think it better to stick to the text and not bracket ἐν with Kroll, we do not do so on the basis of Festugière’s reasons, but rather because there seems to be no sufficiently compelling reason to tinker with the received text.

<sup>37</sup> Reading ἔχειν for ἔχει in line 8 with Festugière who follows Kroll’s suggestion in the critical apparatus.

<sup>38</sup> We have kept the case of the manuscript reading τοῦ πειθνηίους γενέσθαι (MSS πειθνηίους), as does Festugière, rather than adopting Kroll’s proposed πειθνηίους. This continues the dative of ἀμφοῖν.

appetite.<sup>39</sup> Since spirit is the one of these in the middle, taken with the one it makes the concord of the musical fourth (4:3), while taken with the other it makes the fifth (3:2). The concord between spirit and reason is the fifth, while that between spirit and appetite is the fourth. At any rate, the Pythagoreans called the latter a ‘syllable’<sup>40</sup> insofar as it is not a perfect concord, while the fifth is more a concord than this one.<sup>41</sup>

So too, surely one must allow that the relation that spirit bears to reason possesses more of a concord than that which appetite bears toward spirit, even if the separation between the latter two is lesser than that between the former. After all, while some things have desire only, other things have both reason and desire. Nonetheless, the concord of spirit with reason is greater, even if the separation between them is greater than that between spirit and appetite where the interval is smaller. For, as was said earlier, by nature spirit loves to align itself with reason and tends to be its ally rather than the ally of appetite when reason and appetite are in conflict. For this reason one must allow that there is more of a concord between spirit and reason than between spirit and appetite.

One must note that the concord that results from all – the octave – was again the one which the Pythagoreans called the most complete concord of all.<sup>42</sup> After all, it is truly harmony itself, for out of all [of the harmonies], it alone has the distinctive feature that *Timaeus* describes (80b): the motions of the deeper sounds catch up with the motions of the higher sounds when the latter begin to slow down, and when they catch up, they combine the first with the last and make manifest a single motion that gently decreases from the high toward the low.<sup>43</sup> Since it alone among all the concords is allotted this distinctive feature, it would

<sup>39</sup> At *Republic* 432a, Socrates uses the idea that temperance runs throughout the soul (since it involves reason ruling as well as the other parts obeying) to motivate a musical metaphor. The term for the octave is *dia pasôn* and in what follows Proclus takes this idea of a psychic harmony very, very seriously.

<sup>40</sup> Huffman (2007), 162 argues that this terminology is indeed early Pythagorean, but supposes that it relates to the practicalities of performance and that it connotes the initial hand positioning for playing the lyre.

<sup>41</sup> See the note by Winnington-Ingram at the conclusion of Festugière vol. 2. It is unclear why Proclus thinks that the musical fourth is imperfect in any sense or less of a harmony than the fifth.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Proclus, in *Remp.* II 249.26–9; in *Tim.* II 234.8–9, and Nicomachus of Gerasa, *Harm.* 5.1.6.

<sup>43</sup> Barker (2007), 28 traces such physical accounts of the nature of concords to Archytus. But that theory seems perfectly general and the *Timaeus* passage affords no particular status to the octave as distinct from other harmonies. Elsewhere Proclus correctly notes that the psychogony in the *Timaeus* yields a musical scale that extends over four octaves plus a fifth. Presumably what matters to him, however, in the present context is that the octave can be seen as composed of the fourth and the fifth.

be fitting for it to be the single harmony of the soul, pervading all its parts and stringing [it] together by means of the motions of the higher and lower parts. It innately harmonises the slackening of the former with the tightening of the latter and produces a really single life out of plurality. 25

We made a digression for these matters, indicating the sense in which Socrates said that moderation is a harmony ‘throughout’ (*dia pasôn*). But if intelligence is the virtue of that which solely rules and moderation is the virtue of that which is [solely] subject to rule, and both moderation and courage belong to that which simultaneously rules and is ruled [sc. the spirited part], then it is obvious that the one that remains, justice, belongs to all [the parts] – to one in as much as it rules, to another in as much as it is subject to rule, and to the [third] in as much as it both rules and is ruled. In this manner, each would be active in accordance with its own status: the one as ruler, the other as subject, and the [one in the middle] as both together. 5 214

Now these matters have become more or less clear, but one might nonetheless pause to enquire into this: How is it that the spirited part, which is both ruler and subject, has a virtue in common with appetite insofar as both are subject (since they participate in moderation), but spirit does not have a virtue in common with reason, though both rule, but instead has courage as its own distinctive virtue? Now in pursuing this question we will have to keep in mind the very truth that has already been stated (213.6): that with respect to essence, the distance (*apostasis*) between reason and spirit is greater than the distance between spirit and appetite. This is so even if, in the conflict between reason and appetite, spirit is never the ally of appetite but instead stands by the side of reason. But this is something that spirit experiences due to its surliness (*authadeia*) against appetite – a [trait] on account of which spirit is often surly towards reason too – not due to its being closely related to reason. Thus it is for this reason that spirit has a virtue in common with appetite insofar as both are subject to rule, but differs from reason even though both rule [in some sense], for its authoritative aspect is entirely distinct [from that] of reason. The one is ruled by itself right from the start, for reason rules itself first and puts itself in order, prior to putting the others in order, and does not permit its own proper desire to remain ambiguous and to be carried along toward what is inferior. After that has been done, it brings measure to the desires of the irrational parts of the soul and leads them back to its own judgement and its desire. The other [part of the soul that rules, sc. spirit] is not ruled by itself, but is rather in charge only of what is inferior from its station above, for what is irrational cannot ever exercise authority over itself nor determine 10 15 20 25 215

itself nor revert upon itself. The fact that spirit is more closely akin to appetite than it is to reason is clear from Plato, for both of them  
5 have the same parents, while reason has a different father.<sup>44</sup> Both spirit and appetite are mortal and either exist or do not exist along with one another. Reason, however, is an immortal thing. Both spirit and appetite are not receptive of understanding (*gnôsis*), while reason naturally is capable of understanding (*gnôstikos*). Therefore because being ruled is a common property of spirit and appetite (for it is thanks to the fact that both are irrational and that they stand in need of being set in order that they are ruled [by something else]), they possess a common  
10 virtue that causes them to revert upon the desire for the ruler. It is thanks to the fact that the nature of the authority (*to archein*) differs in the case of reason and spirit, in the manner just stated, that they possess a different authoritative virtue as rulers. The one possesses a cognitive virtue (for it is reason), while the other possesses a vital one (for it is desire). Where one desire dominates over another, there is need for a virtue that preserves the [appropriately dominant] desire unharmed. But where reason dominates over desire, there is need of a virtue that prepares reason to judge correctly. And this is why intelligence is the authoritative virtue of reason, through which it has understanding, correct judgement, and authority over the [parts] that lack judgement.<sup>45</sup> But courage is the authoritative virtue of spirit, through which it has  
20 vitality (*to zôtikon*) alone, since it does not provide for judgement, being instead a desire that wishes for dominion over the desire of the inferior part, whose uprising against the desires that are superior to it courage does not bear with patience. And if it is indeed as I said earlier (213.4), then it is also the case that there is a greater separation between those that are higher than between those that are lower, then there is nothing surprising in the fact that the harmony too is greater. After all, the progressively lower tone of the way of life renders the harmony indistinct, for among those who are living to a greater extent, there is harmony to a greater extent, while among those that are living to a lesser the harmony is clear to a lesser extent.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Presumably this alludes to the idea that the Demiurge makes the immortal (rational) soul, but allocates to the younger gods the task of making the mortal forms of soul; cf. *Tim.* 42e.

<sup>45</sup> Adding the *καί* after *ορθῶς* which Kroll suggests at 215.18.

<sup>46</sup> ἡ γὰρ ἔκλυσις τῆς ζωῆς ἀμυδροῖ τὴν ἀρμονίαν· ἐν γὰρ τοῖς μᾶλλον ζῶσιν μᾶλλον ἔστιν, ἐν δὲ τοῖς ἥττον δῆλον ὡς ἥττον. It would seem that Proclus is playing here with the musical sense of *ἔκλυσις*. Typically it means 'feebleness' or 'faintness' but it has a specifically musical sense of a lowering of the voice through three quarter tones (s.v. LSJ III). The grammar of the next clause is a bit opaque, but we think one must understand ἀρμονίαν with μᾶλλον and ἥττον.

<2. *The Four Virtues in the Political Classes: 215.28–217.5*>

We have stated therefore that there are only four virtues and we have said what the function (*ergon*) of each is. How then one must arrange them within the political classes should already be evident. After all, it is obvious that one ought to place wisdom particularly among those who rule and engage in preliminary deliberation<sup>47</sup> in the city as a whole (for what else is needed more than intelligence for one who deliberates? – that [virtue] whose function it is to see what is good or bad in every action). And one ought to place courage in the class that makes war and defends [the *polis*], for tradition calls those who endure dangers, who are invincible against those who strive against them, and who treat death with contempt ‘courageous’. Should they thus dominate all who would attempt to overthrow the political order (*politeia*), it is fitting to call them courageous. But the due measure of their activities is one that is received from those who are truly rulers and in this respect they are also moderate since they look to the rulers for their decision. In the final class which provides all the goods that are necessary, there is merely moderation, so that they do not – by exalting in the abundance of these necessities – assume [those things] are sufficient for their own happiness and give no regard to the rulers, because the abundance of necessities produces an illusion of the good. It is, in any case, necessary for this class to be moderate – to show deference to those who rule; to be ordered by them and to be persuaded by their authority, just as Timaeus says (*Tim.* 48a) that in the universe Necessity follows Intellect.<sup>48</sup> When all [of the classes within the city-state] have received their appropriate virtue in this way– one being intelligent, the other being courageous, and another being moderate – the function of justice is already made known. It provides for each [of the parts] that is so ordered in relation to the others to play only its own [role] and not to usurp the allotted

<sup>47</sup> τῶ ἄρχοντι πάσης τῆς πόλεως καὶ προβουλευομένῳ. The πρόβουλος was a description of a standing committee that prepared motions for consideration by the people; cf. Aristotle *Politics* 1298b29 and 1322b16. The term is subsequently used to describe the Roman consuls.

<sup>48</sup> Proclus here alludes to the famously difficult ‘new beginning’ in the midst of Plato’s *Timaeus*. Proclus’ exact understanding of the nature of Necessity as a cosmic principle and the manner in which it is persuaded by Reason is hard to determine in the absence of this part of his commentary on Plato’s dialogue. Van Riel (2009) works on extracting an account from a range of sources, guided by the report in Damascius *in Phlb* 17.1–3. Whatever the details of his reading of this part of Plato’s dialogue, it is certainly clear that he regards the working or commercial class in the ideal city as largely inconsequential. See below 218.19–20 where he supposes that these citizens do not even require education.

role (*exaireta*) of the others by meddling.<sup>49</sup> Each one instead lives where it was stationed by the science (*epistêmê*) of politics. The guardian attempts neither to serve as a soldier nor to farm the land, falling from his own [role] into a life that is unworthy. Nor does the auxiliary attempt to be a labourer or to take part in preliminary deliberations. Finally, the trader does not attempt to serve in the auxiliary's role on the ground that it is he who provides the weapons to those who do serve that role. Nor does he attempt to introduce a motion<sup>50</sup> on the ground that he furnishes the necessities for those whose responsibility it is to introduce motions. Thus it is that among the classes within the *polis* all the virtues have the same role in relation to one another that they do in the individual soul.

## <II. INTERPRETATION OF SOCRATES'

### DISCUSSION: 217.6–228.27>

#### <A. The case of the city: 217.6–221.8>

##### <1. *The classes in the city*: 217.6–219.17>

Having set out these matters satisfactorily, let us now consider the manner in which Socrates introduces his account of them. He starts again from the virtues among the classes in the *polis* since, as he said (368d), we wish to see in larger letters what has been written in finer print, for the *polis* is greater in bulk than a single soul. (Even if it is the case that the virtues of the *polis* in general are images of those in a single soul, since here too the dictum (*logos*) rules which says that things that are more indivisible are superior in power to those that have been carried down into greater divisibility, and that the things that are fewer in number surpass in power things that are greater in quantity.) So in any case, since [Socrates] intends to look at all [the virtues] within the classes in the *polis* first, he first puts the kinds in the *polis* themselves in order. I say 'in order' because he first assumed men who concerned themselves only with life's necessities, without war, ignorant of education, living in accordance with nature, content with very little, and leading their lives moderately.<sup>51</sup> In the second [phase] (373e), when he increased the size of the small community, he came to the point

<sup>49</sup> ἀλλοτριπραγίαν; cf. Plato, *Rep.* 444b2 and Proclus' subsequent use of this in his interpretation of the lots in the myth of Er (617e) at *in Remp.* II 146.19–147.1.

<sup>50</sup> That is to say, to introduce a motion for debate within a council – the task of the guardians who govern the *polis*.

<sup>51</sup> Proclus refers here to the simple way of life that Glaucon ridicules as a 'city of pigs' 372a–d.

of introducing by necessity a register for military service, because of outside enemies.<sup>52</sup> Once this [register for military service] was introduced, he displayed the educative regime (*logos*) that was its necessary complement, lifting the manner of living (*bios*) from a natural life to one that involves dealing with threats. How else will these people be preserved without soldiers, since they will sometimes have neighbours who would wrong them? Thus it is necessary for there to be those who will defend [the community] for the sake of those who will farm, for the same person will not do both. After all, the aptitude for farming is one thing, but that for military matters is another, and as the aptitudes differ, so too will the perfections [of each of the two aptitudes]. It is also necessary to perfect each person in accordance with his nature, unless one intends for him to lead a life that mixes extraneous elements into the one that is natural for him. In addition, they will not neglect the appropriate time for the task that is theirs – which is in fact what would come about if the same person turned out to be a soldier and also a farmer, and when there was a need to work the land, he was compelled to serve as a soldier, because a war had arisen. Alternatively when it was time for soldiering, he could be planting or ploughing, being occupied with the land instead of fighting for the homeland; wielding agricultural tools instead of weapons – the hoe in place of the shield – as if he will be in want of life's necessities should he not do the farming.<sup>53</sup> If it is therefore necessary the soldier be one person and the procurator of necessities be another, then one needs to posit these two political classes: the commercial and the auxiliary (*epikourikos*). The former is able to supply life's necessities, while the latter is able to defend both itself and the other class. Education is necessary for one [sc. the military class], but not for the other [sc. the commercial], for while the one very much needs character (*êthos*), the other one does not.<sup>54</sup> When he had explained what this character was like, Socrates taught that the kind of education that brings about the perfection of this class was two-fold – one that extends to the souls of men, the other to their bodies. It is, after all, necessary for those who are to undertake military service that they have a body strong enough for the pains that inevitably [go with soldiering].

<sup>52</sup> κατάλογον στρατιωτικόν; cf. Aristotle, *Pol.* 1303a9

<sup>53</sup> Proclus develops rather colourfully the point made by Socrates at 370b7.

<sup>54</sup> Proclus must mean that the commercial class does not require the *paideia* that the auxiliaries require for courage. Nonetheless, they must still have some form of education that enables the virtue of temperance through which they defer to the judgement of their leaders and do not meddle in affairs that do not belong to them.



25 In the third stage, as they say, Socrates increases the city in much  
the same way.<sup>55</sup> Having selected from among the auxiliaries themselves  
those who are distinguished from the others by nature and who have  
been educated to a greater extent, he established another class from  
219 them.<sup>56</sup> And if I may offer my own opinion,<sup>57</sup> it seems to me that since  
there are two kinds of training – one in *mousikê*,<sup>58</sup> the other in physical  
fitness – Socrates would have deemed those allotted a greater receptivity  
5 for *mousikê* and better educated than others in it to be the ones naturally  
suited for authority over everyone. It is, after all, *mousikê* that produces  
people who are more endowed with intelligence since it teaches the  
most serious things about the gods, about daemones, about heroes, and  
about men, while physical training does not do this. As evidence of this  
fact I note that the entire constitution [of the best state] is destroyed  
10 not through lack of attention to physical training but rather through  
lack of attention to *mousikê*, as the sacred speech of the Muses itself  
says (VIII 546a–d) [where it is observed that] the rulers are unworthy of  
their fathers by virtue of neglecting *mousikê*.<sup>59</sup> So if we should say that  
he selects over others those who are naturally suited for this [kind of  
*paideia*] and are trained in *mousikê*, and that he appoints them guardians,  
we should not be saying anything that departs from his intention, even  
15 if he himself merely says something like this: to distinguish out of the  
guardians themselves those who are best to rule over all, but without  
adding in what respect they are best.

<sup>55</sup> Reading τρίτον δε ὁμοίως with Festugière's suggestion in place of Kroll's τρίτῳ δὲ † ὁμῶς. Cf. 217.21 where Proclus introduces the expansion from the city of pigs to the luxurious city with δεύτερον δὲ ἐπαύξων.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. *Rep.* III 412d.

<sup>57</sup> Festugière supposes that there is contrast ('s'oppose') between ὥς δὲ ἑμαυτὸν πείθω and what Socrates is reported to have said above at 218.24 (τρίτον δε ὁμοίως φασίν): while Socrates forms the guardian class simply from the auxiliaries who are naturally best and best educated, Proclus would form them from the auxiliaries who are naturally best and best educated specifically in *mousikê* or culture. Were this so, one might reasonably expect contrastive particles. We suspect that Proclus supposes himself to be simply making more explicit Socrates' own basis for selection, since after all, he adduces evidence later in the text for his view that Socrates too takes cultural education to be the principal qualification. However, while we cannot deny the evidence that Proclus brings forward in support of his view about *mousikê*'s primacy, it is interesting to see how conspicuous is his omission of the dominant theme of 412c–14c: the idea that the guardians are distinguished by their conception of a complete overlap between their own interests and the interest of the *polis*.

<sup>58</sup> As in volume I of the *Republic Commentary* we simply leave the word *mousikê* untranslated so as not to invite confusion. *Mousikê* can be literally any art over which the Muses preside. The sense is wider than 'music' and might be better characterised as 'culture'.

<sup>59</sup> See further on this topic Proclus' discussion in Essay 13.



<2. *The virtues among the political classes: 219.17–221.8*>

Thus, having established these three classes that constitute the *polis*, he then proceeded to discover in the manner which we have already foreshadowed what the factor is in virtue of which one would say that the city composed from these classes is intelligent, as well as that in virtue of which it is courageous, and in virtue of what it is moderate and then just.<sup>60</sup> 20

Firstly the guardians possess knowledge of good and evil, since they are the class best at *mousikê* ... (For they have been taught by the art of the Muses about the things which we spoke about earlier, namely how one ought to think about the beings that are superior to us and how one ought to think about human flourishing (*eudaimonia*). It is for this reason that he [scil. Socrates] compelled the poets to compose their works in accordance with these guidelines. If it is also necessary for this class to have a share in mathematics and dialectic, then it would be to an even greater extent intelligent and knowledgeable.) 25

In the next place, the auxiliaries are especially courageous, due to their way of life amid arms and physical training and military exercises. (In any event, everyone will agree that this virtue especially pertains to these people – even those who have a rather casual conception of courage.) 220

Next, it is incumbent upon the commercial class to be moderate, for an abundance of life's necessities requires this virtue in particular – necessities whose surfeit [in isolation from this virtue] leads instead to a life lacking in discipline.<sup>61</sup> 5

Finally, there is the fact that the three classes together, in both ruling and being ruled amidst their association with one another, preserve their independent roles (*autopragia*), which is what he showed justice to be. After all, every person – both those who praise justice and those who condemn it – say that not lusting after what does not belong to you is practising justice. And in fact this is why they reproach justice; on the ground that it means being content solely with the things that pertain to you (*ta oikeia*) whereas what is required is to have the things that belong to everyone [else too]. Now up to this point, acting as founder of the city,<sup>62</sup> by adopting [the concept of] justice, Socrates commits no 10

<sup>60</sup> We have seen fit to break up the two long sentences that take up the next 25 lines of Proclus' text into separate paragraphs on the four virtues.

<sup>61</sup> ἢ γὰρ τῶν ἀναγκαίων εὐπορία ταύτης μάλιστα δεῖται τῆς ἀρετῆς, ὧν ἡ πλημμονὴ μεθίστησιν εἰς τὴν ἀκόλαστον ζωὴν. The fact that μεθίστημι can connote a change for the better or the worse lead us to suppose that Proclus intends to contrast between the presence and absence of moderation that is not marked by the usual grammatical means.

<sup>62</sup> The phrase 'as founder of the city' (ὡς πόλεως οἰκιστῆς) is a little awkward as it stands, and Wendland's conjecture ὁ τῆς πόλεως οἰκιστῆς (noted by Kroll) may well be correct. The meaning will be the same in any case.

injustice against those who condemn justice.<sup>63</sup> After all, they themselves say that it is a fine thing *by convention* and honoured as a matter of necessity since establishing customary [injunctions against injustice] is a way of avoiding being treated unjustly. This of course they regard as the worst of evils, while doing injustice is the greatest good – justice being an intermediate between both which is neither good nor evil but [simply] necessary. Therefore just as we said by employing justice as concomitant (*plêrôma*) for good things, he would not commit any injustice against those who censure it, for it is considered to be good by convention. But now, since he attempts<sup>64</sup> to establish that justice is genuinely good and something fine by nature rather than merely by convention, he adds that it also gives authority (*kratos*) to the other virtues (433b–c), for each performs its own independent function through justice and none of them does as much to conserve the city as it does. In any case, it has been shown (434b) that the mixing up of the business of the guardian [class], of the auxiliaries, and of the commercial class is the complete and utter ruin of the constitutional order. Thus if justice is on a par with the other virtues which even those who condemn justice agree to be good by nature<sup>65</sup> – Take for example, intelligence. For after all, everyone clings to intelligence by nature. (Or at any rate, those who censure intelligence either censure it by employing their intelligence (*emphronôs*), and [therefore] intelligence is not a thing worthy of censure if it censures correctly, or they [censure it] unintelligently (*aphronôs*), and [therefore] intelligence is not a thing worthy of censure if it is not correctly censured)<sup>66</sup> – [so that if it is agreed that justice is on

<sup>63</sup> That is to say, he does not beg the question against those like Thrasymachus or Callicles who doubt the value of justice. There is a certain irony in the Greek in that those arguing against justice are its ‘prosecutors’ (*katêgoroi*) as if in a court of law.

<sup>64</sup> Festugière reads καταπειράζων in place of Kroll’s emendation καταπειρῶν on the ground that this is a far more common word, and better suited to the context: Socrates does not merely ‘insert’ a new point but moves onto the offensive against his adversaries who argue for only a conventional value for justice. The construction with the genitive here is also much better suited to this verb. The manuscript has κατασπειρῶν but there seems little sense to be found in that in this context. Proclus does not suppose Socrates to be planting the seeds of an argument to the effect that justice is a good by nature. Rather, he is attempting to vindicate that claim.

<sup>65</sup> Lines 220.28–221.8 constitute a single sentence in Proclus’ Greek. His train of thought is interrupted at this point by the line of argument earlier encountered at *in Remp.* I 26.19–30. (For commentary see note *ad loc* and the Introduction to Essay 2.) We have broken Proclus’ sentence into a number of shorter ones in the translation to make for easier reading and have used the n-dash to show when he returns to the consequent of the conditional whose antecedent is interrupted at this point.

<sup>66</sup> Perhaps Proclus regards the supposition that there might be an *intelligent* criticism of the value of intelligence to be self-refuting. Or perhaps he applies the reasoning that Socrates deploys against Polus in the *Gorgias* 476d: the subject gets done to in the

a par with intelligence] then it is entirely necessary for justice too to be good by nature and not merely by convention, as is also the case with intelligence.

<B. The case of the human soul: 221.9–228.27>

Having brought these matters concerning the virtues of the political classes to a successful conclusion, Socrates goes on to virtues of the parts of the souls, which we said are prior to them. He organises the entire account of these psychic parts with a triple division. 10

<1. Dependence of collectives upon individuals: 221.13–223.1>

First he shows that those very differences in way of life between people – whether one considers them merely in the differences in social orders in a single city-state or whether one considers differences in entire nations (*ethnos*) – derive from no other source than differences in the life of the soul. As he says [people are] ‘not sprung from oak or rock’ (544d).<sup>67</sup> That is to say, they are not the result of the lowest level of nature (for which the oak is an image) nor as a result of the lifeless and three-dimensional body insofar as it is body (for this is what the rock illustrates). Speaking at the level of the nation generally, he says that Greeks are more receptive to intelligence, while Thracians have more of the spirited part of the soul, and Phoenicians are more commercially inclined. In each of these cases, the entire nation is like that as a result of the soul since some of them are ruled by reason, while the others are ruled by spirited or appetitive parts of the soul. For whichever part each lives [most fully], that is what they are, even if, as they live, they possess all of the parts, [nonetheless] their character is determined by what occurs to them most readily, and the whole nation is called rational (*logoeidês*) 15 20 25

same manner as the agent does. Thus when an agent punishes a wrong-doer justly, the wrong-doer is acted upon justly. And if justice is a fine thing or *kalon*, then the wrong-doer has fine things done to him. On the further assumption that fine things are either pleasant or beneficial, then since punishment is not pleasant, it must be the case that he has beneficial things done to him. So in the case at hand, perhaps if intelligence is censured intelligently, then it is censured correctly. Now, assume that what is done correctly is done well (*eu*). But the object of the action can be denominated by the adverb that modifies the agent, so intelligence does well and so is good and not a proper object of censure. This is perhaps even less plausible than the self-refutation argument mooted earlier. But whatever its correct detailed interpretation, the general line of argument is one that Proclus seems much taken with.

<sup>67</sup> Plato quotes here (and Proclus quotes Plato quoting) an evidently very ancient proverbial expression which appears in Homer and Hesiod, in slightly different form: *Theogony* 35; *Il.* 22.126, *Od.* 19.163.

or spirited (*thymoeidês*) with reference to the part of the soul which lives in it most fully. They [sc. whole nations] therefore either possess these differences as a result of the body or as a result of the soul. But it is not as a result of the body, for while they might be hot or cold and white or black as a result of the body, they are not intelligent or courageous or moderate or the opposite of these [virtues]. Therefore it would be as a result of the soul that they possess differences in these [characteristics]. This is the first point that he showed.

Now perhaps some people might say that even these differences among the nations are corporeal, for they are consequent upon mixtures within the body and these [corporeal mixtures] are what differ among the nations – not the powers of the soul.<sup>68</sup> Nonetheless, even if they were to say these things, it is obvious that they must concede the differences to be themselves a result of the soul, and it, following upon the mixtures of the body, gives rise to these differences. So Socrates' argument still stands and these [different] ways of life result from the soul, even if it should have the mixtures as its basis. But it is necessary right from the start to stop to clarify this issue, lest we be compelled to reduce the soul to corporeal nature. For while it is the case that among those who are lacking in education the soul's powers follow upon [bodily] mixtures, nature enjoins the body to serve and the soul to command as he says in the *Phaedo* (79e).<sup>69</sup> And in addition, it is not even the case that the entire appetitive or spirited [part of the soul] undergoes affections in common with the [bodily] mixtures. It is certainly not the case that love of money or love of honour are enslaved to bodily mixture, if indeed the love of pleasure belongs to one part while irascibility belongs to the other.<sup>70</sup> In those who have been educated, however, these

<sup>68</sup> Proclus' target here, as often, is the view defended by Galen. Cf. *in Tim.* III 349.21–350.8 where Galen is specifically identified with the view that psychological powers depend upon corporeal mixtures.

<sup>69</sup> The uneducated person, in whom the psychic activity is determined by bodily mixtures, is *unnatural* while the educated person is natural. How could the soul be determined by bodily mixtures in one case, but not in the other? Proclus' view is that the soul in fact enslaves itself to these mixtures and, through its ignorance of its own nature follows them. In the *Timaeus Commentary* he uses the analogy of the person who sees his own distorted reflection in running water and takes himself to be undergoing a change. And indeed, his upset is genuine and so he does undergo change. But the agent of that change is himself, while the reflection in the water merely provides the occasion for the change that he originates in himself. In its nature, however, the soul is impassive in relation to the body. Cf. *in Tim.* III 330.9–331.1.

<sup>70</sup> See below at 225.3–16 where Proclus explores the implications of the fact that there can be conflicting desires within a single psychic part as well as between parts. Love of money and love of pleasure both belong to the appetitive part. But the glutton simultaneously desires that expensive meal and is horrified at the expense. Presumably

things predominate over the [corporeal] mixtures so that the first principle [sc. the soul] would not be stamped [with the impact of corporeal mixtures] or else, whilst it is stamped, it would not allow the impact of the blow to have any effect.<sup>71</sup>

This, as I said, is the initial object of Socrates' exercise: showing that the differences among these kinds of life are in the souls themselves not only for the reasons we have stated, but [demonstrating this] also from the fact that, since the multiplicity made up of individuals lives a certain way, the composite is said to be of such a character thanks to their shared common life. After all, it is as a result of those who are living wisely that there is a multitude that is wise (whether the specific multitude be one comprised of a city or of a nation). [Likewise,] it is as a result of those living in a spirited manner that there is a spirited multitude, and from those living in a commercial manner that there is a commercial multitude.

<2. *Non-identity of reason, spirit and appetite: 223.1–227.27*>

In the second place, on top of the previous point, he shows that which is necessary for the subject at hand – that within the soul, the rational, spirited and appetitive parts are not one thing. This, after all, is necessary in order that the first three [sc. the classes in the city] should be shown to be analogous to the latter three [sc. the parts of the soul] and that the former differ from one another by reference to the same definitions of life.<sup>72</sup> Second, he shows this, having assumed the following as a matter upon which there is agreement: it is impossible for the same thing to do or to undergo opposites in the same respect in relation to the same thing. Rather, if the same thing [is to do or undergo this, it must be] in a different respect or in relation to a different thing, for it is possible to be heated and cooled, or to be standing still and to be in motion, or to heat and to cool, in so far as it does so in the same

Proclus' point here – though it is very compressed – is that such a conflict within the appetitive part would be impossible if the psychic part were entirely enslaved to corporeal mixtures. (Of course this point relies on the idea that there is a single corporeal mixture that would determine a psychic part and overlooks the possibility that different bodily properties might determine different psychic properties in one and the same part.)

<sup>71</sup> Compare the Stoic position on the initial impact of emotions in the wise person. As Seneca notes, the Stoic sage may still jump when a loud noise occurs or blanch at a fearful sight, but the sage's soul is not carried on into the emotion of fear. Cf. Sorabji (2000), 66–75.

<sup>72</sup> It is not enough that both the *polis* and the soul should be composed of three parts. Rather, these parts need to be analogous to one another in such a way that there are clear parallels between the civic and psychic virtues and also in order that the deviations from the ideal in each case should be parallel.

respect,<sup>73</sup> but not in relation to the same thing, and again it is possible to do or undergo opposites in relation to different things. The same thing may be both illuminated and cast into shadow in relation to one  
 15 thing or another, when it is illuminated by one thing, but shaded by the other. And a thing is able to be nourishing in the same respect in which it produces destruction in relation to different things. This is what happens if it turns out that what nourishes one part and makes it grow is, by the very fact of its making this part grow, such as to make another  
 20 part wither due to an opposition between them. For as someone said, ‘What benefited in one case, was the very thing that caused harm in another.’<sup>74</sup> Nonetheless, I say that it is impossible for the same thing, in the same respect and in relation to the same thing, to be such as to do or to undergo opposites.

Having secured agreement on these matters, he takes the case of the lives of those who are morally strong-willed (*enkratês*) and those who are incontinent (*akratês*)<sup>75</sup> – ways of life in which reason is in conflict with spirit or reason and appetite are in conflict, or there is conflict  
 25 between spirit and appetite. The latter occurs among those who are nobly engaged in a military campaign due to love of honour, since when there is a strengthening of appetite due to hunger, the one part [of the soul] says ‘It must be endured’ while the other part cries out ‘Withdraw!’ The conflict prior to this [sc. that between reason and appetite] takes place in those who are ill when reason orders that if the  
 30 body has a fever, one should not drink, but appetite encourages one toward drink, and the [two parts of the soul] fight with one another.  
 224 The case prior to both of these [sc. the conflict of reason with spirit is illustrated by those] who suffer insult but manage to endure it, even though the spirited part is roused to anger. For instance, in this line Homer portrayed Odysseus undergoing this condition when his spirit was provoked

<sup>73</sup> The text has καὶ ὁ κατὰ τὸ αὐτὸ μὲν, which Kroll obelises. Kroll proposes καὶ ὄν with some reservations (ut videtur) and wondered whether ὅλως had somehow been corrupted into the current reading. Festugière, more plausible to our mind, reads καθὸ [κατὰ] τὸ αὐτὸ μὲν, which our translation adopts.

<sup>74</sup> Thucydides, *Hist.* 2.51.2 describing the hit and miss nature of treatments for the plague in Athens during the Spartan siege.

<sup>75</sup> Proclus reads Aristotle’s famous distinction between the strong-willed and the incontinent person into Plato’s text; cf. *EN* VII.1, 1145b8, ff. In Aristotle’s account the strong-willed person feels the attraction of doing the wrong thing, but steels himself to do what virtue requires. The incontinent person feels the attraction of the wrong course of action and gives in to it – though, at least at some point, he thinks that he should not. By contrast with both, the virtuous person simply sees nothing attractive in doing what does not accord with moral excellence.

Endure, my heart. You have endured other things more horrible than this.<sup>76</sup>

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To put matters briefly, let us then say that reason and spirit undergo opposites at the same time in relation to the same thing, i.e. the insult, and that the one says that it is necessary to take vengeance, while the other says that it is in no way necessary. Therefore reason and spirit are not the same thing, for it is not possible for the same thing to do or to undergo opposites in the same respect and in relation to the same thing. Again, in the case we mentioned about those who have a fever, reason and appetite shout opposite commands in relation to the same thing: drinking. But it is not possible for the same thing to do or undergo opposites in the same respect in relation to the same thing. Therefore reason and appetite are not the same thing. Yet again, in the case of those who are engaged in a military campaign and are famished, spirit and appetite produce opposed voices in relation to the same thing. But it is not possible for the same thing to do or undergo opposites in the same respect in relation to the same thing. Therefore spirit and appetite are not the same thing. Thus these three things differ from one another essentially (*kat' ousian*).

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It is clear that, in the case of the axiom agreed upon,<sup>77</sup> he has woven together doing and undergoing, doing this implicitly,<sup>78</sup> for perhaps someone might say that irrational motions are a kind of activity (*energeia*), and perhaps someone might say they are affections. (I have heard already some people saying that when the parts are moved with due proportion, then the movements are activities, but when they are moved without such due proportion they are affections.) But however it should turn out, what has been agreed to includes the motions of [the irrational parts of the soul]. As a consequence, if someone were to say that the one part acts, while the other part undergoes, and that these [sc. the acting and the undergoing] are in conflict (then it is clear to an even greater extent that this distinguishes these things from one another), for the active property is an opposite that is the cause of a passive

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<sup>76</sup> *Od.* 20.18. The previous line – στήθος δὲ πλήξας κραδίην ἠνίπαπτε μύθῳ ('striking his breast he addressed his heart in words') – is quoted by Plato at *Rep.* 441b6; cf. *Phd.* 94d8–9.

<sup>77</sup> That is, the proposition at 436b8–9: Δῆλον ὅτι ταῦτόν τ' ἀντιπρὸς ἀλλήλων ποιεῖν ἢ πάσχειν κατὰ ταῦτόν γε καὶ πρὸς ταῦτόν οὐκ ἐθέλησει ἄμα, ὥστε ἂν ποῦ εὐρίσκωμεν ἐν αὐτοῖς ταῦτα γιγνόμενα, εἰσόμεθα ὅτι οὐ ταῦτόν ἦν ἀλλὰ πλείω. ('It is clear that the same things will not wish to act or be acted upon in opposite ways, in the same way and in relation to the same thing at the same time, so that should we ever find these things happening among them, we shall know that it is not the same thing, but more than one.')

<sup>78</sup> ἄρρητον αὐτὸ ποιῶν. One would not normally translate ἄρρητον by 'implicitly' but it seems to fit the context. There may be something wrong with the text in any case since Kroll notes that ρρη is under erasure.



225 opposite. Thus if a specific opposed passive affection has a specific active [cause] related to it, it will also be opposite to the affection derived from this. Therefore if the opposite is not identical to what undergoes, then the opposite of that which suffers the affection is essentially distinguished from the agent to an even greater degree.<sup>79</sup>

5 What are we then to say about the love of riches and the love of pleasure? Do they differ in their essence? Or are they the same in essence (*homousios*), but exist as different desiderative powers? Those who are lovers of money and also gluttons make clear that these [desires] are in conflict with one another. On the one hand, due to their gluttony, they launch themselves forward to provide for themselves whatever will satisfy their passion. But then, due to their avarice, they cry out for the  
10 opposite, saying ‘Don’t buy it – a frightful expenditure of money!’ They either starve their love of pleasure by dint of loving money or else the other way round, they discard their love of money for the sake of their love of pleasure. If, therefore, these things differ in their essence, then why does it not make the parts of the soul four in number? But if they [sc. the desire for pleasure and the desire for money] are in conflict and  
15 undergo opposites without differing in essence, then it is also unnecessary for the other parts [of the soul] to differ in essence due to the fact that they undergo opposites.

In raising these problems we are unaware of our failure to note the fact that Socrates calls appetite a ‘many-headed beast’ (*Rep.* 588c). *Qua*  
20 irrational life it is one, and it is many in as much as it is right next door to the body which is completely and utterly plural and divisible – just as the rational part, by virtue of being akin to intellect, is more indivisible than any other part of the soul. The appetitive part is thus essentially one-and-many, and for this reason it has powers that are in

<sup>79</sup> τὸ γὰρ ἐναντίον ποίημα πάθους αἰτίον ἐστὶν ἐναντίου· ὥστ’ εἴ τι πάθος ἐναντίον ἔχει ποίημά τι τινός, ἔσται καὶ τῷ ἀπ’ ἐκείνου πάθει ἐναντίον. εἰ οὖν μὴ ἔστιν ταῦτόν τῷ πάσχοντι τὸ ἐναντίον, μείζονως διέστηκεν κατ’ οὐσίαν τοῦ ποιούντος τὸ ἐναντίον οὐ αὐτὸ πάσχει πάθους. As both Festugière and Kroll admit, this is deeply obscure. An example might help, but Proclus provides none. We think that the line of thought is as follows: suppose that acting and undergoing are themselves opposites and suppose further that in a psychic conflict one part of the soul acts while the other part undergoes that action. Corresponding to the subjects – the agent and the patient – there are properties corresponding to the doing and the undergoing (the ποίημα and the πάθος). These will be specific to the specific causal interaction: one might be the property of cutting, the other the property of being cut. These too are opposed, as are the generic features of being an agent and being a patient. Thus if in cases of psychic conflict the parts of the soul do not merely hold opposed pro- and anti- attitudes toward the same object (e.g. the drink), but causally interact in the psychic struggle, then they are even more clearly distinct since they come to have opposite properties – both generic and specific – in the course of their battle with one another.



conflict since they take their impetus from its differentiated essences in order that in this respect too it should be assimilated to the body,<sup>80</sup> 25  
for the body has also been composed from opposites. Therefore [the appetitive soul] is one to the extent that it has a single desire – love of the body – through which it is differentiated from those parts that are rational. After all, the spirited part is not in love with the body. Instead it desires victory and honour, and on account of these things frequently neglects the body and looks down upon the way of life that goes with it. Nor is the reasoning part [in love with the body], since its object of 30  
desire is that which is really good. But it is only the appetitive part that is in love with the body,<sup>81</sup> whether it should be desirous of pleasure or of possessions.<sup>82</sup> All these things are, after all, matters of the body, for even possessions are things that we are compelled to acquire because of the body, as he says in the *Phaedo* (66c), since we are enslaved to the body and to the body's appetites. And surely the person who is in love with possessions would not willingly scorn the body, even if it turns 5  
out that there is a point at which he will die due to his love affair with things. As a result, the appetitive part is simply such as to be in love with the body and is in this respect one, but it is also such as to be in love with possessions or infatuated with pleasure, and is in this respect not one. It is for this reason that Plato did not say that it was a multitude of animals, but rather said that it was *one* animal with *many* heads. While it 10  
lives at different times in accordance with different heads, it inevitably does so in a manner that involves love of the body. In this respect it is – just as we said earlier – third, since the rational part is first (in as much as it desires intellect), while spirit is in the middle since it desires power, for [in agreement with the *Oracles*] Power is intermediate between

<sup>80</sup> ἵνα καὶ ταύτη συμφύηται τῷ σώματι. Cf. in *Remp.* I 280.5–6 for a similar use of the passive but in relation to knower and known: κατὰ ταῦτα δὴ καὶ τὸ νοοῦν ὑπὸ τῆς ἀληθείας ἐνιζόμενον καὶ τὸ νοούμενον ἀλλήλοις συμφύεται· καὶ τὸ μὲν νοεῖται, τὸ δὲ νοεῖ, γενόμενον ἑκάτερον ἀγαθοειδές, καὶ ἐφαρμόζει θατέρῳ θάτερον.

<sup>81</sup> μόνον δὲ τὸ ἐπιθυμητικὸν φιλοσώματον. Our translation takes μόνον with ἐπιθυμητικόν, as its position naturally suggests. Logically, this looks back to the previous clause, contrasting the appetitive part with both reason and spirit. But as the subsequent argument shows, Proclus also thinks that there is *a sense* in which the appetitive part is *solely* in love with the body. Even the miser who denies himself a meal to save money would not actively scorn (*kataphronein*) the body, as the lover of honour and victory does when he punishes what he regards as his weak and inadequate body with yet another brutal training session. This underlying love of the body is what makes the appetitive part of the soul *one beast* with *many heads*. So, looking toward what comes next, μόνον could be heard with φιλοσώματον as well. No English translation can convey the syntactic economy involved.

<sup>82</sup> On this passage and Proclus' theory of pleasure in general, see van Riel (2000), 122–3.

15 Intellect and Existence (*Hyparxis*).<sup>83</sup> The trace (*emphasis*) of the latter reaches to the third [part of the soul, sc. appetite], and it is due to this that it loves the body which participates solely in Existence. The trace of Power reaches to that which is prior to appetite, and it is due to this fact that it [sc. spirit] desires power. The trace of Intellect, however, reaches to the very first thing [in the soul] and it is due to this fact that it [sc. reason] aims at intelligising (*to noein*). Here too that rule holds  
 20 sway which shows that the trace (*emphasis*) of the things that come first extends more widely and the things that are higher are the objects of desire for more things than are things that are lower.<sup>84</sup> Thus the final part of the soul is such as to be in love with the body and desires only this: the preservation of the body. But since the body is two-fold – there is that [body] *in which* [the desiring part] exists, and then there is that *by which* it preserves [the body] (since it is unable to be preserved by itself) – due to this, it possesses two forms of desire. On the one hand,  
 25 there is the desire that leads toward the natural state of that in which it is (and it is in accordance with this desire that [the desiring part] becomes a lover of pleasure, since every pleasure leads toward the natural condition).<sup>85</sup> On the other hand, there is the desire for the acquisition of that which is needed by that in which [the desiring part] exists, and it is in accordance with this that the [desiring part] becomes a lover of possessions, for every acquisition of things is welcomed [by it] for the sake of caring for the body. Thus, in so far as things are like this, it was necessary for these powers to always be in harmony with one another –  
 227 I mean by this that the one desires the preservation of that in which it is [sc. the body], while the other desires the things that are necessary for the preservation of this [body]. Sometimes, however, the first, rather than striving for what preserves the natural state (*to kata physin*), instead seeks the by-product (*parakolouthêma*) of the pathway back to the natural condition of that in which it is (which at any rate destroys

<sup>83</sup> Majercik argues that this passage alludes to a Chaldean triad, with Existence replacing the Father; Majercik (2001). It is perhaps open to question whether the *Oracles* themselves identified the Father with Existence (*Hyparxis*) or whether this was Iamblichus' innovation. Nonetheless, it seems very plausible that Proclus here alludes to the *Oracles* (or to some understanding of the *Oracles* that his audience would be likely to share). Hence we have inserted the reference to the *Oracles* in square brackets to alert the modern reader that the evidence that follows *gar* is an appeal to authority.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. *ET* propositions 56 and 57.

<sup>85</sup> This seems to presuppose familiarity with the idea of pleasure as a movement back to a natural condition that is found in the *Philebus*. The first kind of desire, then, is a desire for the natural condition of the body in which the soul is lodged. Given that pleasure is awareness of the return to the natural condition, then such a natural desire is, in a sense, a desire for pleasure and so long as it confines itself to just what is necessary for maintaining the body's balance, it is not to be condemned.

it [sc. the body] through the love of pleasure and maims it with myriad mutilations). And sometimes the other [power] fails to pursue the things that fulfil the necessary needs of body as nothing more than this, but instead pursues them as things that are primary goods. [When this happens], each [power] stands at variance with the other because it has set as a goal that which is really for the sake of something [else]. These goals, since they are material, are in conflict with one another; which is why some [goals] contribute toward the growth of others by virtue of their own destruction.<sup>86</sup> After all, the unlimited desire for pleasure requires the expenditure of money, since pleasure is produced with the aid of [other] bodies, and the easiest route for this is through a reduction of one's wealth. Likewise growth of wealth requires a reduction in the things that produce pleasures for the body. In those circumstances, then, in which the things that are for the sake of well-being are sought as primary goods, the desires that belong to appetite are set at odds with one another. They no longer aim at one thing – the natural state of the body – but rather at two things where the satisfaction of one inevitably comes about at the expense of the other. Now since the natural goal of both is just one thing, it is for these reasons that Socrates made it [sc. appetite] one part of the soul, even if it does have many heads – a situation that could not obtain, as we have shown, in the case of reason [in relation to] spirit, or in the case of them both [in relation to] appetite.

<3. *How the virtues are established in the soul:* 227.27–228.27>

However, since these matters have been resolved, and the parts of the soul have been distinguished in respect of essence, then (as the third cup to the Saviour, as they say) consider how he [Socrates] establishes the four virtues in the soul. And this is something that is no longer difficult. If he had wished to speak in a manner more familiar to ordinary people, he could have said that wisdom (*phronêsis*) is the virtue of reason, while courage belongs to the spirit, and justice belongs to the appetite for possessions, while it remains for moderation (*sôphrosynê*) to be concerned with the love of pleasure. But as things stand it pleased him to deal with them in a manner inaccessible (*abatos*) to ordinary people and to draw out analogies between the virtues in the soul and those in the

<sup>86</sup> This is a difficult passage. Proclus' general points are that the two kinds of desire which the desiring part of the soul possesses, when they desire what they ought (i.e. the well-being and preservation of the body, of which pleasure is a mere by-product (*parakolouthêma*) and such physical possessions as are needed to look after a body), then these are in harmony with one another. When they desire pleasure and possessions for their own sake, they fall into conflict with one another. Such conflicting desires are inevitable, moreover, because the objects of the desires belong to the divided and therefore conflicting level of material things.

10 classes of the city. [So instead] he declares that wisdom is a perfective disposition<sup>87</sup> that benefits that part in the soul that is uniquely suited to rule over the others. Courage is a perfective disposition of [that part] in the soul that rules in a secondary way.

15 Having posited these two ruling virtues for the two parts of the soul that rule, he speaks of the remaining ones as follows: moderation is the disposition that leads the things that are subject to rule to be of like mind<sup>88</sup> with those that rule on the matter of ruling itself.<sup>89</sup> The final part [of the soul] is subject to the other two, while the one in the middle is subject to the one that comes before it. Justice is a disposition that belongs to each of the parts of the soul who rule and to those that are subject to rule because it determines the appropriate function [for each one], for it is necessary that the [parts] be in agreement with one another, some agreeing to rule and others to be ruled, some to perform the  
20 actions appropriate to those who rule, others [to perform the actions] that are appropriate for those who are subject to rule. After all, ruling and being ruled are understood in a specific form of life which is exactly what justice maintains – allotting to one part only the function that is fitting for that which rules (viz. to be engaged in deliberation on behalf of those who are the subjects of rule), but to another part [justice allots] the function fitting to that which both rules and is subject to rule (viz.  
25 obedience to what comes before it and authority over what comes after it). To the last part it allots what is appropriate to that which merely is subject to rule (viz. to be subject to the rulers and to fulfil their judgement).

### <III. ASSORTED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS:

2 2 8 . 2 8 – 2 3 5 . 2 1 >

<A. Why are there only three parts in the soul?: 2 2 8 . 2 8 – 2 3 2 . 1 4 >

229 So this is the manner in which Socrates set out the account concerned with the political virtues. And it has become obvious that it is necessary that they should be of this character and this many in number. Only one thing remains to determine precisely: on what basis could it become

<sup>87</sup> ἡξίον τελειωτικὴν; cf. 206.14 where we learn that each virtue is such as to perfect the thing of which it is a virtue.

<sup>88</sup> Kroll follows the corrector of the manuscript in printing *bomonoia* rather than *bomologia*, pointing to Plato's own use of the former at 432a. Festugière demurs, pointing out that Proclus is often free in his quotations or allusions to Plato's text. The sense is clear enough and there seems little to determine the matter one way or another.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. 432a.

clear that there are only three parts of the soul that are fitted to receive these [virtues]? While Socrates showed that the parts differ essentially from one another, the fact that there are only these [parts] and that they are neither more nor fewer in number still requires some examination, in order for us to understand that the virtues of this sort are of this number, neither more nor fewer. After all, if there are more parts, then we may also need other virtues. 5

Apprehend this point: when there are two [things] that have three opposed properties, then there are two intermediates, just as we learned in the case of the elements. In each case, [the element] takes two [properties] from the element that is closer and one property from the remaining one that is further away.<sup>90</sup> Assuming this [general rule], let us see which properties belong to reason and which belong to the body. Thus while reason has the property of being partless (*amerês*), the body has multiple parts (*polymerês*). In addition, the reasoning part is desiderative (*orektikos*), while the body is lacking in desire (*anorektikos*). And reason is intellectual (*noêtikos*), the body is lacking in intellect (*anoêtos*). Now, these [three properties] have been grasped, one on the basis of reason's essence, one on the basis of its life, and one on the basis of its understanding (*gnôsis*), for its nature was three-fold: Being, Life, and Intellect. Thus when these [properties] have been distinguished in this 10 15 20

<sup>90</sup> The point that Proclus makes here would be perplexing to anyone not acquainted with Plato's *Timaeus* and Proclus' interpretation of the doctrine of elements in that dialogue. To find the mean proportional terms between 8 (2×2×2) and 27 (3×3×3) use 2×2×3 and 2×3×3 to arrive at 12 and 18. Proclus assigns three powers to each of the elements in the *Timaeus* and shows how the intermediates bind together the extremes (fire and earth) in just the same way:

Fire	tenuous	sharp	easily moved
Air	tenuous	blunt	easily moved
Water	dense	blunt	easily moved
Earth	dense	blunt	moved with difficulty

In the case at hand, the extreme terms are taken to be the faculty of reason and the body. Just as air and water provide the terms of a continuous geometric proportion between the opposed elements of fire and earth, so too the spirited and appetitive parts of the soul bind reason to the body:

Reason	indivisible	having desire	intellectual
Spirit	indivisible	having desire	lacking intellect
Appetite	plural in form/parts	having desire	lacking intellect
Body	having many parts	lacking desire	lacking intellect

respect, the spirited [part of the soul] is partless (for in its own nature it is simple and due to this it provides a single constitutional arrangement (*politeia*).<sup>91</sup> It is, at the same time, also desiderative, since it has a desire for power (*dynamis*). Spirit, however, is not intellective but is like the body in this respect. The appetitive part of the soul, on the other hand, has multiple parts, as the body does, as well as being multiform (*poly-*  
25 *eidês*) (and it is for this reason that it is said to be a ‘many-headed beast’ and contributes toward many constitutional arrangements).<sup>92</sup> While it is desiderative [as the spirited part is] it is not desire for the same things, and it lacks any portion of understanding (*gnôsis*). Therefore it is necessary for the spirited part to be proximate to reason, while the appetitive  
230 part is proximate to the body, since they share two distinguishing properties – the one with reason, the other with the body. Among the three distinctive properties possessed by each one, they share two in common with one another (both being desiderative and lacking in intellect), but they differ with respect to one (being partless and having many parts). Therefore it is not the case that there is any part between body and soul  
5 and other than these.

Nonetheless, it might well seem that Socrates leaves room not merely for these parts [but also others] when he says that each of us is well disposed when each of the three parts confines itself to conducting its own business, and these [three] are harmonised with one another through moderation (*sôphrosunê*) and he adds ‘if there are any others between these’ (443d7).<sup>93</sup> After all, this might seem somehow to leave space  
10 not merely for these [three parts of the soul], as I said. Yet what could there be in us that is desirous neither of honour nor of possessions, but of something between these?<sup>94</sup> Perhaps, then, Socrates threw this [remark] into the discussions on the three [parts] as an indication that  
15 the ways of life that souls lead are not unmixed. (I mean, for instance, that the way of life in accordance with reason is not unmixed with the

<sup>91</sup> There is a single psychic or civic arrangement that results from the dominance of spirit, viz. timocracy.

<sup>92</sup> That is to say, there are multiple political or psychic orders that arise from the dominance of appetite, viz. oligarchy, democracy, and tyranny.

<sup>93</sup> Modern interpreters have mostly passed over this concession by Socrates in silence. Adam (1902) says nothing about it. The exception is Murphy (1951), 28 who argued that Plato’s tripartite division was not meant to be exhaustive but was instead posited as the basis for explaining the three kinds of character that were politically salient to the task of the *Republic*.

<sup>94</sup> Following this question, the manuscript reads καὶ μήτε ὁρεγόμενον μήτε τιμῆς, μεταξύ δὲ δὴν καὶ τούτων. This is clearly a mere repetition of what has gone before it, and is both otiose and awkward. It is deleted in the manuscript by the third hand (Kroll’s m<sup>3</sup>). It is printed in square brackets by Kroll and omitted without comment by Festugière. We too have followed the lead of the third hand and omitted it.

others; or that the way of life in accordance with spirit has nothing in common with the extreme terms<sup>95</sup> [on either side of it]; or that the way of life that involves only appetite involves no admixture with what is prior to it.<sup>96</sup> Rather, there are also some [ways of life] that are intermediate between these. If it should turn out that some people are lovers of learning and lovers of honour, then [this way of life] is simultaneously in accordance with reason, but also in accordance with spirit. Or if some people are lovers of honour and lovers of wealth, then this way of life is simultaneously in accordance with spirit and also with appetite. These people either pursue honour in order to hoard wealth or else they aim at wealth in order that they might be honoured by those who are impressed by wealthy people.<sup>97</sup> This is parallel to the prior cases where people either pursue learning in order that they might be honoured for having a bag of learning, or alternatively, they pursue honour in order that they should be venerated by those who have learning and so have a share of it. These, therefore, are the forms of life that are in between reason and spirit or correspondingly between spirit and appetite. They are not, however, other parts of soul, but rather result from mixtures of these [three parts] whereby they become diverse rather than simple. After all, each of these considered in itself (*auto kath' hauto*) was simple. That which is solely in love with learning overlooks everything to do with honours and, holding everything bodily in contempt, exerts itself in pursuit of just one thing: the understanding (*gnôsis*) of the truth. That which is in love with honour wishes for rustic simplicity and looks down upon the body as a mere shadow, since it is insatiably possessed of only one [goal] – honour. That which hungers [sc. the appetitive part], however, troubles itself only over the body and what belongs to the body, since it interprets honour or learning as pointless ornaments. Since these simple sorts are unmixed, Socrates said that the ways of life for souls that lie between result from mixing them. All these ways of life need to be harmonised with the unmixed ones through the best harmonies, in order that there should be due measure (*metron*) between the desire for learning, the desire for honours, and the care of the body – even if a specific desire for some things comes about through desires for

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<sup>95</sup> πρὸς τοὺς ἄκρους keeps the analogy between the extreme terms in a proportion that are bound by a middle alive.

<sup>96</sup> Prior in order of value, that is – not causally prior. Proclus' point is that even the person sunk into ways of life in which the desiring part of the soul is in charge still reasons and still cares enough about reputation to feel slighted.

<sup>97</sup> Such personality types are related to, but not exactly the same as, the personality types that figure in the decline from timocracy to oligarchy in *Republic* VIII. There the flawed form of the timocratic person, perceiving the fleetingness of honour, secretly desires wealth as a more secure good than honour.



15 others<sup>98</sup> – in order that it should be harmonious and not discordant with reason. It is therefore not necessary to think that he is indicating natures of parts [of the soul] other than those [natures] that perfect political virtue, but instead he is indicating a mixture of these very [natures] and a genesis of more diverse forms that are fitting for political men – people to whom it belongs (using their practical wisdom) to choose for  
20 themselves some passions instead of others, or to rid themselves of some passions rather than others.<sup>99</sup> The forms<sup>100</sup> of all the natures [of the soul parts]—whether unmixed or mixed together, simple or diverse – belong to some other [virtue] and not to political virtue.

Unless perhaps the three things which he assumed were reason, spirit [specifically] with respect to the faculty of anger,<sup>101</sup> and appetite [specifically] with respect to the love of the body (for he showed the difference between all of them by assuming conflict in relation to these [specific manifestations of spirit and desire]),<sup>102</sup> and then between them [Socrates] indicated that in some people the love of honour becomes somewhat spirited (*thymoeidês*), but not with respect to the angry part (*to orgistikon*). (In any event, the [part] that is moved toward anger is often rendered weak<sup>103</sup> due to the love of honour.) In other people the love of  
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<sup>98</sup> Proclus seems to have in mind the situation in which there are mixed motives for, say, the acquisition of knowledge: both because it satisfies the rational part of the soul and also because the learned person is honoured for his learning, thus feeding the spirited part as well.

<sup>99</sup> The civic or political gradations of the virtues secure moderation of the passions or *metriopatheia*. It is the next level, the purificatory virtues, that secure freedom from the passions or *apatheia*. So the civic virtues are those that are exhibited in reason's relation to the irrational parts of the soul that accompany embodiment.

<sup>100</sup> τὸ γὰρ πάντων ἴδεῖν in line 21 is marked as corrupt. Kroll suggests δεῖν, while Festugière recommends τὸ δὲ πάντων εἰδῶν <χρησθαι>. We however, suppose that a copyist has substituted ἴδεῖν for εἰδεῖν. They are somewhat similar orthographically and semantically related. Thus it would be a natural mistake to make. If we read εἰδεῖν then Proclus' remark, though still fairly obscure, points toward the natural virtues. He has just contrasted the civic virtues, which impart *metriopatheia*, with the next highest gradation. This remark, then, contrasts the civic virtues with the previous level, the natural virtues, that involve fortuitous combinations of temperaments that are prerequisites for the civic virtues. Cf. Damascius, in *Phdo* I.138.

<sup>101</sup> τὸ ὀργιστικόν here and at line 27 are unique in Proclus. It occurs as a gloss on χολωτοῖσιν ἐπέεσσιν in a scholion on *Il.* 4.241 where the anger of Agamemnon is described.

<sup>102</sup> Proclus has in mind Plato's examples of Odysseus' reason rebuking the anger of the spirited part of the soul as well as the example of the Leontius who is ashamed of his desire to look at the bodies of the slain.

<sup>103</sup> Festugière keeps the manuscript reading of θραύεται, while Kroll's apparatus recommends πρᾶνεται. While there is much to be said for sticking to the text we possess unless we have good reasons to do otherwise, it must be observed that Proclus' few uses of θραύω relate to the breaking of wings in the famous passage from the *Phaedrus*, while πρᾶνω is used in a sense that seems quite apposite to the diminishing



money [is similarly softened], for this too often conflicts with the love of pleasure. [Both love of wealth and love of honour] are more powerful than [the tendencies to pleasure and to anger], since indeed they [sc. the tendencies to pleasure and anger] alter in conjunction with the body's mixtures, but these [sc. love of wealth and of honour] require no such mixture, since among all age groups they afflict souls.<sup>104</sup> It is not because there are other things between reason, spirit and appetite that [Socrates] said that one must harmonise the aforementioned things and 'if there should be some intermediate things between them'. For it is not true that these things, the love of honour and the love of wealth, are something different between those that have been assumed for the sake of comparison.<sup>105</sup> For what was assumed was a specific thing that belongs to the spirited part and a specific thing that belongs to the appetitive part – not the whole of each one. Thus it is necessary to lead the things intermediate between these, together with the things that have been assumed, into a single harmonious whole and to order one's own soul.

<B. Is perception another part of the soul?: 232.15–233.28>

It is obvious from the things that have been demonstrated that the soul is neither one nor is it divided into more than the previously discussed parts – except that the perceptive part (*to aisthêtikon*) is different from all of these. It is distinct from reason, because perception is irrational and belongs to ways of life that are irrational. It is distinct from the two irrational parts because, while these [irrational parts of the soul] are desiderative in character (*orektikos*), the perceptive part is concerned with understanding (*gnôstikos*). And in addition to this, the perceptive part also belongs to things in whom the desiderative [faculty] is not present (for instance, the heavenly beings),<sup>106</sup> while the desiderative

of anger through the love of reputation. Cf. *in Alc.* 229.12–13 where Socrates' careful phrasing of the refutation of Alcibiades τοῦ ἐλέγχου τὸ πληκτικὸν καὶ πραῦνει. If we were to take on Kroll's suggestion, the sentence might read: 'what is moved to anger is often mitigated by the love of honour.'

<sup>104</sup> The visceral drive for bodily pleasure or the visceral instinct to anger were thought by Platonists like Galen to be a function of the mixture of bodily elements. These visceral responses are particularly prevalent in the young, but the more evolved desires of love for wealth or reputation occur in older people who are not thought to be so much in the grip of their body chemistry.

<sup>105</sup> These are specific conditions of the appetitive and spirited parts of the soul – not additional faculties within the soul that could come into conflict with spirit or appetite *per se*; though there may be conflict between them and other characteristic ways in which spirit and appetite are manifested (viz. righteous anger or love of pleasure).

<sup>106</sup> On the levels of perception had by the visible cosmos according to Proclus, see Baltzly (2009a).

[faculty] necessarily presupposes perception, for desires are accompanied by perceptions. It is for this reason that the signs of the zodiac are not characterised by the desiderative [part], but by the perceptive [part],  
 25 for this belongs to all living things.<sup>107</sup> And in any case, *Timaeus*<sup>108</sup> said that plants also participate in the perception of pleasures and pains and he considered it right to call them living things and has showed that they are living things, for everything that participates in life is a living thing.  
 233 As I said, therefore, this is something other than the three [parts of the soul identified in the *Republic*] since it underlies all of them. It underlies the rational part insofar as the acts of recollection that belong to reason occur through perception. And it underlies the irrational [parts of the soul] too insofar as their motions take place in conjunction with perception. But it is necessary to inquire likewise about the imagination  
 5 (*to phantastikon*), whether it is to be counted as entirely the same as the perceptive [faculty]. After all, on the one hand, since it is active externally, it is, so it would seem, a faculty of perception. But on the other hand, since it retains the impressions of what is seen or heard or otherwise grasped by some sense, it would seem that it is a faculty of memory. So this is the faculty of imagination. Nonetheless, Socrates says in the  
 10 *Philebus* (39b, ff.) that the painter in us is different from the scribe who, through perceptions, inscribes in the soul imitations of experiences

<sup>107</sup> διὸ καὶ τὸ ζῳδιον οὐ τῷ ὀρεκτικῷ χαρακτηρίζουσιν, ἀλλὰ τῷ αἰσθητικῷ. In his appendix to volume 2, Kroll considers amending to ζῳον. Festugière has a long note in which he defends the manuscript reading. He first rejects Kroll's reading on the ground that one cannot truly say that animals are characterised, not by desire, but by perception. In fact, they are characterised by both. This is certainly true of animals. But Kroll's emendation is τὸ ζῳον and this could as easily be 'living things'. Indeed, in the very next sentence Proclus reminds us that on Plato's view, plants have a kind of perception. Festugière's positive reasons for keeping ζῳδιον are that it continues the line of thought at line 21 above that the heavens have a kind of perception. In addition, he supposes that Proclus' remarks draw on astrological practices in which signs of the zodiac that are connected in one way are said to 'see' one another, while signs connected by other lines are said to 'hear' one another. This doctrine is attested in Manilius and Housman is able to find parallels. (Cf. Housman (1903), xviii–ix.) Festugière concedes that Manilius also speaks of relations of love and enmity between signs and this might support the view that astrological practice does not suppose that the signs are characterised only by perception, but also by desire. But Festugière relies on Housman's claim that these desiderative relations are unique to Manilius and not part of accepted astrological wisdom. This is perhaps a bit tendentious, but certainly within the realm of possibility. In any event, we have retained the text as it stands, though we think that there is no compelling reason to reject Kroll's proposal. It *does* lead on nicely to the next sentence, but there is also something charmingly barmy about perceptive (but not appetitive!) signs of the zodiac.

<sup>108</sup> Cf. *Tim.* 77b1 where plants are accorded the third kind of soul δόξης μὲν λογισμοῦ τε καὶ νοῦ μέτεστιν τὸ μηδὲν, αἰσθήσεως δὲ ἡδέας καὶ ἀλγυνῆς μετὰ ἐπιθυμιῶν. See Carpenter (2010).

(*pathêma*) of what the senses convey, while this painter no longer works in conjunction with perception but instead stimulates independently the impressions derived from perceptions. He indicates, by ranking the painter with the imagination, and the scribe with the perception in general (*koinê aisthêsis*),<sup>109</sup> that these differ in essence from one another. Furthermore, in the *Theaetetus* (191c) he clearly distinguishes the wax block in which the imprints of the perceptible objects are impressed from the sense faculty. Whether these things differ from one another in their essence or whether the form of its nature is one and many, this is obvious: that what remembers and what perceives are different – even if the existence (*hypostasis*) of these things is divided among a single essence (*ousia*), which though it is single possesses an essential plurality. It is also clear that the faculty of memory is closer to reason than is the perceptive faculty, for it also receives impressions from this [the faculty of memory] just as it does from perception.

So much then for these matters, [which we have enquired into] in order that we may hold that,<sup>110</sup> even if there are other parts of the irrational soul, those about which we have just now spoken are the ones that are useful for political virtue and which are educated by it.

<C. How is the soul one if it is tripartite?: 233.29–234.30>

I myself know that Porphyry in his *Miscellaneous Problems* reports a certain exchange of Medius with Longinus<sup>111</sup> on the subject of the parts of the soul which deserves more than a cursory treatment. Now Medius made the soul of eight parts and divided it into the ruling faculty (*hêgemonikon*), the five senses, the reproductive faculty and, further to all these, the faculty of speech.<sup>112</sup> Longinus asked, ‘What then makes the soul one single thing when it has been divided into eight?’ But Medius

<sup>109</sup> It is unclear whether this refers to the common sense as the faculty through which, say, the sight, sound, and smell of the horse is unified as perceptions of one thing or whether Proclus means that the scribe is to be ranked with perception in general. Both differ from one another.

<sup>110</sup> ταῦτα καὶ περὶ τούτων, ἵν’ ἔχωμεν ὡς ἄρα. Kroll notes ‘nempе εἰ δῶμεν’ while Festugière translates the text before us as ‘En voilà assez sur ce sujet, afin que nous maintenions que ...’

<sup>111</sup> Porphyry quotes the preface to Longinus’ attack on Plotinus and Amelius, *On the End*, in his *Life of Plotinus*. There Longinus mentions Medius the Stoic as one of the philosophers he, Longinus, encountered as a young man (*V. Plot.* 20). On the Stoic division of the soul into eight parts, see Aetius 4.2.1.1–4 (= SVF 2.836 and Long and Sedley 53D).

<sup>112</sup> This eight-part division of the soul is also given in Aetius 4.2.1.1–4 (Long and Sedley 53H = SVF 2.836) and attributed to the Stoics.

asked in turn, ‘Well, what makes the soul single according to Plato’s tripartite division?’ This, then, let us surely consider a question worth a discussion on our part. Now it is clear that the question [‘What makes the soul one?’] is not the same for the Stoics with their eight-part division and for Plato’s tripartite division. After all, they make the division of the parts a corporeal one.<sup>113</sup> (It is for this reason that they indeed set themselves a puzzle about where they will put the one (*to hen*) in virtue of which the soul is a single thing, since it has been divided into eight parts that are not continuous.) Plato, however, says it is incorporeal, and since things that are incorporeal are unified without being confounded [with one another], he would not have the same worry on the subject of the unification of the tripartite soul. Furthermore, it is also possible that the account given by Plato finds a way around this by another manner – by virtue of the fact his account makes reason out of one substance that is more divine, while the irrational soul is made of another that is greatly inferior, and while the former sustains (*synechein*) and orders, the latter is sustained and ordered. This, therefore, is just like what happens when form comes about in matter and it introduces the one, and we do not at all need anything else unifying these things with one another. In a corresponding manner, surely since reason too has the same status as form, it unifies the irrational life and no third thing is needed in order to bind them together. And though, indeed, the junior gods produce the irrational soul according to Plato,<sup>114</sup> it is the single Demiurge who produces the rational soul, while being the prior cause of those who produce the irrational soul [sc. the junior gods], so one would no longer be puzzled about the substance that unifies the irrational soul with reason. After all, since the Demiurge who is single is the cause of the one and the prior cause of the other, he provides unification to them and continuity between them.

<D. The two types of desire (*orexis*) and understanding (*gnôsis*):

235.1–21>

235 Such then would be the answer to noble Medius by those who speak on behalf of Plato. Let us conclude the account of it by adding this point

<sup>113</sup> Compare Iamblichus, *On the Soul* (= SVF 2.826 and Long and Sedley 53K): ‘How are the soul’s faculties distinguished? Some of them, according to the Stoics, by a difference in the underlying bodies. For they say that a sequence of different breaths extends from the commanding-faculty, some to the eyes, others to the ears and others to other sense-organs. Other faculties are differentiated by a peculiarity of quality in regard to the same substrate’ (trans. Long and Sedley).

<sup>114</sup> Cf. *Tim.* 41c5–d3 where the Demiurge addresses the junior gods and instructs them to imitate his creation of rational soul, ‘weaving together the mortal with the immortal’ to create mortal living beings.

to what has been said before: that in the rational soul there is desire  
(*orexis*) in addition to understanding (*gnôsis*). This desire is sometimes 5  
for Being and sometimes for Becoming, and by virtue of this it goes  
up toward Being or falls back into Becoming. It is, on the one hand, in  
love with wisdom (*philosophos*) and, on the other hand, in love with Be-  
coming (*philogenesis*). Similarly in the case of understanding: while there  
is understanding of the intelligibles thanks to the circle of the Same,  
there is also understanding of perceptible things thanks to the circle  
of the Different (*Tim.* 37b–c) – [acts of understanding] through which 10  
the rational soul leads itself upward toward the vision of the former or  
examines the nature of perceptible things.

The irrational powers are thus images of these things. The desider-  
ative powers are images of the desires [of the rational soul], while the  
cognitive (*gnôstikos*) powers [of the irrational soul] are images of the  
[kinds of] understanding [in the rational soul]. The power of imagi-  
nation is an image of [reason's] intellective (*noêtikos*) power, while the  
perceptive capacity is an image of the capacity for opinion. The spir-  
ited capacity is an image of the desire for ascent [in the rational soul], 15  
while the appetitive power is an image of the [desire in the rational  
soul] that is generation-producing (*genesourgos*). After all, it too [sc. the  
appetitive power] deals with the body in the same way that the rational  
soul's philogenetic desire deals with Becoming, while the spirited part  
disregards the body when it looks to an incorporeal good (viz. honour).  
On the other hand, since imagination is a formative intellection (*noêsis*  
*morphôtikê*), it wishes for understanding of some things, while percep-  
tion possesses the same object as opinion, namely what comes to be (*to* 20  
*genêton*), since the object of opinion (*doxaston*) is grasped 'by opinion,  
together with irrational sensation' (*Tim.* 28a2–3).

## Introduction to Essays 8 and 9

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Essays 8 and 9 are unique within the context of Proclus' *Republic Commentary* in being so obviously different treatments of more or less the same subject matter. Accordingly, we will provide one introductory chapter for both essays.

### I. PROCLUS AND THE METAPHYSICS OF GENDER

As with Essay 7 dealing with the tripartition of the soul and the nature of the virtues, Proclus interprets Plato's text in terms of metaphysics. In Socrates' discussion, it is simply agreed that in order to fulfil the role sketched for the guardians, the men and women must engage in the same activities. The latter cannot, as was the case in 5th-century Athens, be largely confined to the home. Glaucon agrees that this requires that they should be given the same education. Plato's text then entertains two potential objections to the co-education of female with male guardians. First, they will have to undertake physical training, and since this is correctly done in the nude, the men and women will have to work out together naked. But this is alleged to be absurd. Second, the fact there will be both male and female guardians contravenes the founding principle of the ideal *polis*: one task for one nature and, presumably, one nature for each task. But men and women have different natures. Thus guardians of both sexes contravenes the principle of the natural division of labour. This objection, though it speaks of 'natures', is not explicitly loaded with any kind of metaphysics of sex or gender. The objections move at the same conversational level as the arguments about virtues and souls in Book IV.

As he did in Essay 7, however, Proclus places Socrates' position in an explicit matrix of metaphysical possibilities.<sup>1</sup> The underlying question, on his view, is the unity of the human species and the relation of the unity question to the sameness of virtues across all members of the species. As he sets out the dialectical possibilities, the Peripatetics occupy

<sup>1</sup> As Pass (2017) astutely observes, the metaphysical arguments for the fundamental sameness of men and women are complemented by observations drawn from the facts (cf. 248, 23–5 below).

a position that says that men and women are alike in kind (*homoeidês*) but have different virtues. The Stoics, by contrast, suppose that men and women have the same virtues – the virtues shared by all rational creatures including gods – but are not alike in kind. Socrates alone has what Proclus will insist is the only consistent position, endorsing both the view that men and women are of the same kind and that they have the same virtues. The scholiast has not given us a diagram for this, but it would be easy enough to do

	same kind?	same virtues?
Aristotle	Yes	No
Stoics	No	Yes
Socrates	Yes	Yes

While the characterisation of the Aristotelian position is perhaps broadly consistent with Aristotle's *Politics* I.13, the idea that the Stoics supposed that men and women are different in kind is not supported by our evidence.<sup>2</sup> But Proclus is likely less concerned with historical accuracy than he is with filling his matrix of possibilities and, since the Stoics *did* affirm that men and women, as well as gods, have the same virtues, they were convenient for his purposes. Situating them in this dialectical picture in this way probably does violence to their actual view, but fairness to materialists is not typically among Proclus' concerns.

Both the competing positions are ruled out in favour of Socrates' alternative by means of a metaphysical principle that requires that virtues align with *eidos* or species. This principle is articulated in both essays (*kanon*, 237.14; *axiôma* 252.27) and is purported to describe the way in which Intellect distributes perfections in accordance with essences. The rule is that where we have one essence, there is a common perfected condition. But since virtues are dispositions that perfect things, this implies a common virtue among all members of a kind. So both the Aristotelian and 'Stoic' positions involve a metaphysical impossibility. If men and women are *homoeidês*, then (*pace* the Aristotelian) their virtues must be common. If men and women have the same virtues, then (*pace* the position attributed to the Stoics), they must be one in kind.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> See Asmis (1996); Engel (2003).

<sup>3</sup> The Stoic attribution of a common virtue to gods and humans would also violate this principle. Proclus rejects the Stoic notion at *in Tim.* I 351.11–14 with the remark that this shows how far they are from Platonic piety and Socratic modesty, but he does not bother to give any further argument.

In addition, Proclus transforms Socrates' casual comparison between guard dogs and guardians (451d) into 'an argument from the more and the less'. Variation among individuals within a kind is inversely proportional to the kind's place on the scale of being. Male and female *dogs* share the guardianly capacity, so the variation among dogs with respect to this *ergon* is pretty small. But humans are much higher on the scale of being than dogs, so the differences among the male and the female of the species as regards suitability for the same tasks will be even less. Therefore, those human souls that possess the natural aptitude for playing the guardian role will not be distinguished by sex: there can and must be female guardians. At the same time, however, Proclus is ready to admit that men are stronger than women. In this regard, he echoes the Platonic text, but he in fact uses this admission to buttress his earlier argument. He invokes the authority of Aristotle for the claim that things that fall under the same species differ in degree, while those that belong to different kinds do not. The exact reference to Aristotle is uncertain, but we believe that it is *Parts of Animals* I.4, 644a16–22:

Groups that only differ in degree, and in the more or less of an identical element that they possess, are aggregated under a single class; groups whose attributes are only analogous are separated. For instance, bird differs from bird by gradation, or by excess and defect – some birds have long feathers, others short ones. Bird and Fish only agree in having analogous organs; for what in the bird is feather, in the fish is scale.

(trans. W. Ogle in Barnes (1984))

So if women possess the same virtues as men, albeit to a lesser degree, this is in fact good evidence that they belong to the same kind – further evidence against the 'Stoic' position. While Socrates' discussion of the sameness of virtue in men and women in the *Republic* appeals to no such metaphysical principles, Proclus' exegesis of that discussion certainly does. In this regard, his treatment of the arguments of Book V resembles his exegesis of Socrates' discussion of psychic parts and virtues in Book IV.

## 2. PROCLUS AND GENDER POLITICS

What, then, of the gender politics of Proclus' text? The significance of Socrates' insistence upon female guardians has been a hotly contested matter in the literature on the *Republic*. At one extreme we have those interpreters who suppose that the radical proposals of Book V are not serious political proposals at all, but are instead intended by Plato to communicate to the book's real audience the limitations of philosophy



in relation to actual political practice.<sup>4</sup> Other readers take Socrates (and Plato) at his word, but wonder about the significance of this apparently progressive political proposal in light of Plato's other remarks about women in the *Republic* and, more broadly, throughout the Platonic corpus. There is a broad consensus that it makes no sense to ask whether the proposal for women's political role in Book V makes Plato an early *feminist*.<sup>5</sup> Feminism is said in many ways, but on all of them it is distinctively individualist, insisting on overturning women's traditional subordination to men on the basis that this liberates individual women from an oppression that limits their autonomy and denies them the rights due equally to all persons. But Socrates' proposal is not that both women (and men!) who are suited to the task should be offered the opportunity to become rulers, provided that they want to. Notions such as autonomy and individual rights which are presupposed by feminism seem to be entirely absent from the *Republic*. Yet even if we set aside as anachronistic the question, 'Does Book V reveal Plato to be an early feminist?', we can still ask about the extent to which the Book V proposals for women's political participation set him apart from traditional Athenian *misogyny*. Here too interpreters disagree. At one end, we have critics who argue that Socrates' proposal comes down simply to the idea that some women may have the opportunity to take on traits characteristic of ancient Greek masculine gender identity. A few women might become rulers alongside men only by being or becoming *manly*.<sup>6</sup> At the other end of the spectrum we have interpreters who suppose that Platonic souls are essentially unsexed and gender neutral. These interpreters take the disparaging remarks about women that occur in the Platonic corpus to be critical of women as Athenian culture makes them. But there is nothing in female nature that makes this inevitable.<sup>7</sup>

Part of what complicates the interpretation of Plato on these matters is the question of the transmigration of souls.<sup>8</sup> Within this context, it is not immediately obvious what – if anything – fills the role of the person or subject whose biological sex then has a gender construction placed upon it.<sup>9</sup> If the 'metaphysics of gender' is a highly disputed area within contemporary philosophy, the addition of transmigration only makes it more complex. Yet there can be no doubt that Proclus takes Plato's commitment to the transmigration of souls quite literally: this is not

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Bloom (2003), 381–9 and, for very different reasons, Crombie (1962–3), vol. 1, 100–1.

<sup>5</sup> Annas (1976); Pappas (1995), 107–9; Press (2012), 255.

<sup>6</sup> Bluestone (1987); Buchan (1999). <sup>7</sup> Harry and Polansky (2016).

<sup>8</sup> Allen (1975).

<sup>9</sup> For an exploration of the complexities involved in personhood in Plato, as well as an answer of a recognisably Neoplatonic kind, see Gerson (2003).

merely a myth or a parable with a moral point.<sup>10</sup> Moreover, passages from the *Timaeus* on the cycle of reincarnations convey the idea that souls that are currently embodied in female form are enduring the consequences of a moral and intellectual failure in their previous male-embodied life. Timaeus tells his audience:

And if they [sc. the embodied souls] could master these emotions, their lives would be just, whereas if they were mastered by them, they would be unjust. And if a person lived a good life throughout the due course of his time, he would at the end return to his dwelling place in his companion star, to live a life of happiness that agreed with his character. But if he failed in this, he would be born a second time, now as a woman. And if even then he still could not refrain from wickedness, he would be changed once again, this time into some wild animal that resembled the wicked character he had acquired.

(*Tim.* 42b–c, trans. Zeyl in Cooper (1997))

Later at *Tim.* 90e, the nature of the failure of the souls that are embodied in female bodies is made more specific: ‘According to our likely account, all male-born humans who lived lives of *cowardice* or *injustice* were reborn in the second generation as women.’

This puts the Platonist who wishes to find a consistent Platonic position on the nature of female persons in a difficult spot. On the one hand, the Book V argument seems to suggest that at least some women are as capable, or nearly as capable, of the philosophical life – that is, of becoming guardians – as the most capable men. On the other hand, the *Timaeus* suggests that embodied human women are women precisely because they are enduring punishment for moral deficiencies in a previous life. This, in turn, might shed doubt on whether their moral

<sup>10</sup> Not all sober 20th-century interpreters of Plato *did* admit this as a serious philosophical claim. Thus we find I. M. Crombie writing as follows:

Most of this doctrine is to be found in the ‘myths’ or grand eschatological parables with which Plato tries to drive home his teaching in the *Gorgias*, *Phaedo* and *Republic*; but enough of it is to be found in the non-mythical part of the *Phaedo* to make it fair to say that Plato at least thought it decent to impute these beliefs to Socrates. How far he shared them himself it is difficult to say; indeed he frequently makes Socrates say, not that these things are ascertainably true, but that they are ‘likely stories’ told to him by ‘priests . . . who have tried to understand their priesthood’ and so on. One suspects – I find it hard to see with what justification – that Plato’s ideas were more sophisticated and more evasive than those he imputes to Socrates . . .

(Crombie (1964), 77)

Even if twenty-first-century interpreters of Plato are less willing than Crombie to discount the sincerity of the repeated affirmations of transmigration, the topic is not one that figures prominently in standard reference works. For instance, there is no entry for transmigration, reincarnation, rebirth or any cognate term in Fine (2008), nor does it figure as a topic in Press (2012).

and intellectual ‘rehabilitation’ is sufficiently complete, particularly if they are selected as guardian material at a young age.

The tension between the *Timaeus* and the *Republic* on this point is one that Proclus clearly felt. This is an interpretive problem that is shared in the two essays on female guardians. While Essay 9 reports the views of Theodore of Asine, Proclus’ concern about how to reconcile the two dialogues seems to occur outside the context of this reporting. It thus seems plausible that this was an interpretive problem that troubled Proclus, even if it did not trouble Theodore. The complete nature of Proclus’ solution to it needs to be gleaned from what he says here in the *Republic Commentary* with what he says in his *Timaeus Commentary*. Detailed interpretation has been taken up elsewhere, but we will summarise the main outlines of his solution in what follows.<sup>11</sup>

The key to Proclus’ resolution of the tension between the *Republic* and the *Timaeus* lies in the idea that the divine order provides a paradigm for the human order. The relation between men and women ought to be clarified by reference to the relation between gods and goddesses. When it comes to the latter, there is no question of sexual differentiation in terms of male and female *bodies* – at least not in the normal sense of bodies. Yet there is differentiation between gods and goddesses in terms of the cosmogonic roles that they play and, moreover, this differentiation is putatively explained by differences in *gender*. Thus Proclus takes female divinities to play a role in multiplying and differentiating the processions from the highest orders of being.<sup>12</sup> By contrast, male divine principles play a unifying role and are aligned with sameness. Given the valences that attach to unity and plurality in Proclus’ philosophy, this means that female principles are subordinate to male ones:

Thus it is just as it is among the intelligible beings, where the Limited dominates over the Unlimited. Likewise among the intellectual beings, the Male dominates over the Female; and in the hypercosmic things, Sameness dominates over Difference, and Similarity over Dissimilarity. So too in the case of the soul, the revolution of the Same dominates over the revolution of the Different.

(in *Tim.* II 262, 21–6)<sup>13</sup>

Human souls correspondingly possess an intrinsic gender identity through which they are assimilated or rendered like their ‘leading god’. The text that is central to the notion of a leading god is the *Phaedrus* 247a, where disembodied souls form up into eleven formations, each

<sup>11</sup> Baltzly (2013); Schultz (2018).

<sup>12</sup> Cf. *Plat. Theol.* IV 33.15–34.11; 85.2–4; 86.20–87.4; 112.17–18 Καὶ γὰρ ἡ ἑτερότης αὐτὸ τὸ θῆλυ καὶ τὸ γόνιμὸν ἐστὶ τῶν θεῶν; in *Crat.* 70.7–8.

<sup>13</sup> Baltzly (2009b).

arrayed behind a commanding god who leads them up to the high vault of heaven to glimpse the forms. In Plato's text, the character of the god that a soul follows determines certain features of the kind of lover that the person will seek. Proclus generalises the role of leading gods, so that the identity of a soul's leading god establishes certain facts about that soul's *cosmic* 'station and its duties'.<sup>14</sup> Importantly, the question of whether a soul follows a god or a goddess is determined not by chance, but by each soul's intrinsic gender identity:

so there is a single resemblance [sc. to the soul's leader-god] applying to all individual souls, a single division with reference to the cause of both of these ... [T]he differences between souls come not from their bodies nor from relations of this or that kind, as some persons claim, but *from their own particular substance*; for their being organised under different leaders and their distribution are aspects of their substance.

(in *Tim.* III 264.11–19, our emphasis)<sup>15</sup>

The intrinsic gender differentiation of souls causes a sexual differentiation of their higher vehicles (in *Tim.* III 293.14–17). So in Proclus' theory, gender is not the social interpretation placed upon biological sex. Rather, the sexual differentiation between male and female astral and pneumatic vehicles is an image of an intrinsic psychic gender that is *prior to* embodiment. There can, of course, be mis-matches between a soul's intrinsic gender and the sex of the final, fleshy vehicle: Proclus supposes that it is obvious from Plato's text that there can be transitions between male and female incarnations. Proclus also insists that the female body is weaker and seemingly this presents a greater obstacle to the realisation of *masculine* moral and intellectual perfection than the male body. Even female divine principles are more occupied with the things over which they exercise divine providence than gods are. The fact that generating offspring is a relatively carefree matter for male human beings is an image of a gendered division of cosmogonic labour among gods and goddesses:

Just as up above [the divinities] differ in the way in which they generate, with the male contributing unity to the things that have been generated, while in a different manner the female renders their common effects plural and divisible, so too the same account applies down here. There is a difference between the female and the male among their similar reproductive activities. And if the female performs this task more laboriously and the male, not merely without

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Baltzly (2004), 307–8. The notion of 'my station and its duties' was of course popularised by the British Idealists T. H. Green and F. H. Bradley. In spite of the influence of the Neoplatonic tradition upon Hegel, Proclus' notion of cosmic station far outruns the notion of moral obligations flowing from a social role that constitutes a part of one's identity. See Stern (2015).

<sup>15</sup> Tarrant (2017).

labour, but with pleasure, then this too is an image of things among the divine beings. Among them some [sc. the male], through a superabundance of power, are active with much greater ease, since they are liberated and free of concern for the procession of secondary [existents]. Others [sc. the female], however, act, on the one hand, with a lesser degree of transcendent superiority and, on the other, with a greater sympathy for the things that have been engendered.

(in *Remp.* I 246.10–21)

From one point of view, human moral excellence consists in the possession and exercise of common non-gender-specific virtues. But from another point of view, the virtues are that through which the human soul ‘becomes like god’. The latter perspective on virtue matters when we consider that gods too are distinguished by gender – at least at some levels lower than the One. So assimilation to the divine will take *slightly* different pathways depending on the nature of one’s leading god. Even if the ultimate goal is the return to the One, some souls will naturally take a path that ascends through a feminine series, others through a masculine series. A feminine human soul ought to choose an initial incarnation into a female oyster-body, since this is what is consistent with what belongs to it naturally.<sup>16</sup> So Proclus seems to think that a soul such as Diotima’s or Theano’s is ‘at home’ in a female body, while other masculine souls will experience female embodiment as an alienation from their divine paradigm. This is why the *Timaeus* passages can regard female incarnation as a kind of punishment, while at the same time the *Republic* insists on common human virtues for both men and women.

Given the gender differentiation between gods and goddesses in Proclus’ metaphysics, the question of the gender politics comes down to – or perhaps more appropriately, goes *up* to – whether his theology is one that parallels a kind of ‘egalitarian difference feminism’ (male and female divinities play distinct but complementary roles) or whether his theology is differentiated but patriarchal (male and female divinities play distinct and complementary roles, but the role of female divinities is subordinated to that of male ones). Baltzly (2013) gives a negative assessment of Proclus’ gendered theology: it projects male superiority onto a cosmic scale. Layne (2021) argues for a more positive assessment, stressing the complementary and ineliminable role of female divine principles. It may be that a suitable resolution of this question awaits more detailed study of gender as it manifests in the rather unorthodox setting of Proclus’ theology. Or it may be that the tension between these two assessments is just a further manifestation of the tension between the perfection of unity and the overflow of unity into

<sup>16</sup> In *Tim.* III 292.28–293.5 with Schultz (2018), 893–4 for further discussion of a feminine soul’s initial incarnation.

plurality in Neoplatonism. In general, feminine divine principles are associated with plurality and difference, as well as the phase of procession, while masculine principles are associated with unity and sameness, as well as remaining and reversion. From one point of view, the multiplicity that overflows from the One is a deviation or descent from perfection. From another point of view, it is the fulfilment of the productive power inherent in that perfection.

### 3. THEODORE OF ASINE IN ESSAY 9

It remains to say something about Theodore of Asine – the Platonist whose additions to Socrates' arguments Proclus sees fit to report in Essay 9. At the opening of the *Platonic Theology* Proclus names Theodore – along with Plotinus, Amelius, Porphyry, Iamblichus, and Syrianus – as among the divinely inspired interpreters of Plato.<sup>17</sup> They are likened to a chorus of Bacchants following Plato and Proclus falls in behind them. But among these Bacchants, Theodore is the one least known to us. Deuse collected 46 testimonia for Theodore of Asine, some of which he himself thought to be of questionable accuracy.<sup>18</sup> Of these 46, 35 are sourced from Proclus. Deuse posited dates for Theodore of 280–360 C.E. on the basis that Damascius and Eunapius identify him as a student of Porphyry and of Iamblichus, respectively. A single testimonium suggests a falling out between Iamblichus and 'the Theodoreans'.<sup>19</sup> This remark by Julian gains some plausibility from the fact that, following a long exposition of Theodore's views, Proclus levels criticisms by Iamblichus from a work entitled *Refutations of Amelius and his school and of Numenius*. Proclus introduces his exposition of Theodore's views by describing him as 'filled up with the thought of Numenius'.<sup>20</sup> Proclus' attitude toward Theodore is thus ambivalent. On the

<sup>17</sup> 'Those interpreters of the vision (*epopteia*) of Plato who have revealed the most sacred guidance concerning divine matters and who were allotted a nature nearly like that of their guide I would identify as Plotinus the Egyptian and those who received the sight (*theôria*) from this man. I mean Amelius and Porphyry and, in the third place, those who seem to us to have come to be from them like potent statues – Iamblichus and Theodore, and any others after them who, following this divine chorus, have in their own thought experienced the Bacchic frenzy of Plato's teachings' (*Test.* 2, Deuse (1970) = *PT.* I 1 6.16–7.1).

<sup>18</sup> Deuse (1973).

<sup>19</sup> *Test.* 4 = Emperor Julian, *Letters* 12 (to Priscus).

<sup>20</sup> *Test.* 6 = Proclus, in *Tim.* II 274.10–278.25. Baltzly (2018) is reluctant to suppose that this grouping implies any real affinity between Amelius and Numenius on the one hand and Theodore on the other. Amelius is plausibly linked to Numenius. However, close examination of the testimonia for Amelius and Theodore suggests that what binds

one hand, he is regarded as an important predecessor and often styled ‘the great Theodore’. On the other hand, Proclus frequently tells his audience about Theodore’s views only to then go on and criticise them.

Given the paucity of our information on Theodore, the question of the relationship between Essays VIII and IX is a vexed one. The issue has been examined thoroughly by Angelo Longo.<sup>21</sup> Given the parallels between the two essays, it is not easy to separate out Proclus’ appropriation of Theodorean material, nor to rule out the possibility that Theodore himself was drawing upon earlier sources now lost to us.<sup>22</sup> We have no evidence of a commentary on Plato’s *Republic* from Theodore of Asine and it is perhaps more plausible to suppose that Proclus has drawn on ideas from Theodore’s work on transmigration. The full title seems to have been *That every soul is all the forms*, and Nemesius situates it in a dialectical engagement with a work by Iamblichus called *That transmigrations from humans into irrational animals do not take place, nor from irrational animals into humans*. It is perhaps not implausible to suppose that Theodore’s work addressed questions of transmigration generally and, in the course of doing so, may have addressed souls swapping between male and female human bodies. This, in turn, may have invited reflections on the question of whether the virtues of men and women are common. In any event, the material that Proclus presents from Theodore includes five arguments for the conclusion that the virtues of men and women are the same.

What is striking about Theodore’s arguments – at least in Proclus’ presentation, and this is, of course all that we know of them – is that they make no specific reference to the text of *Republic* V. This may be why Proclus presents them as *additional considerations* that Theodore added to the arguments of Socrates.<sup>23</sup> Here, as elsewhere in the testimonia, the connection between Theodore’s Platonism and the exact words of Plato is loose. Indeed, Theodore (and Amelius’) rather ‘free-wheeling’ interpretations of Plato are precisely the things that seem to draw

them together in Proclus’ mind is not a common interpretive approach to Plato, but rather the fact their conclusions sometimes coincide with one another. Thus Theodore practised psephism and drew philosophical conclusions on the basis of the shapes of the letters that make up a word, but there is no evidence of such interpretive excesses in the case of Amelius. Both philosophers, however, did accept the idea that there are Forms of particulars and that the *Timaeus* involves reference to three Demiurges, perhaps aligned with the three kings of *Epistles* II.

<sup>21</sup> Longo (2002).

<sup>22</sup> ‘... a una tradizione comune, ormai consolidata nel tempo riguardo ai procedimenti e ai contenuti, da cui sia Proclo sia Teodoro attingono attuando magari combinazioni diverse, senza che si possa ben definire l’apporto personale dei due’ (Longo (2002), 73).

<sup>23</sup> *In R.* I 253.1–2 καὶ ὅν ὁ μέγας Θεόδωρος συνεξητύπησεν; 255.25–26 Τοσαῦτα καὶ ἂφ’ ὧν ὁ μέγας Θεόδωρος γέγραπεν συνεισφέρειν δεῖ τοῖς Σωκράτους λόγοις.



the most criticism from Proclus (and from Iamblichus as reported by Proclus). It is consistent with the evidence we possess that Theodore simply did not feel the force of the problem that so occupies Proclus: reconciling the seemingly misogynistic character of the comments on reincarnation in female bodies in the *Timaeus* with the seemingly egalitarian character of *Republic* V. In his *Timaeus Commentary*, Proclus notes that at least one of his distinguished predecessors took Plato's remarks at *Timaeus* 42b–c *non-literally*:

If you interpret [the words] 'the nature of a woman' literally, that is how we shall treat the meaning. But if you were to say that through 'woman' he [Timaeus] is symbolically indicating the entire kind of life that is weak, feminized and inclines toward generation – as some of our more significant predecessors understood it – there would be no need of such a solution.

(in *Tim.* III 293.24–9)<sup>24</sup>

Both Tarrant (2017) and Baltzly (2013) argue that the predecessor in question is probably Theodore of Asine, with the former noting that Theodore and Iamblichus are the only members of the Athenian school who are regularly referred to in Book V of the *Timaeus Commentary*. If this is correct, then by resorting to a non-literal reading of one of Plato's comments on transmigration, Theodore dissolved an interpretive problem that occupies Proclus' attention a great deal. Why could Proclus not have taken the same road? This question becomes particularly acute when we consider that Proclus did, in fact, discount the literal truth of some of Plato's remarks on the transmigration of souls. Moreover, he did so by adapting a solution propounded by Theodore of Asine.

Proclus credits Theodore with the insight behind Proclus' preferred resolution of the question of whether human souls enter animal bodies.<sup>25</sup> In spite of Plato's quite literal remarks about human souls 'going into' animal bodies,<sup>26</sup> Proclus supposes that these souls are merely *connected* to an animal body and enter into a relation or *schesis* with that animal. The human soul does not literally inhabit the animal body but instead 'oversees it relationally from without'.<sup>27</sup> So why can Proclus not accept a similarly non-literal treatment of the claims in the *Timaeus* that an undisciplined, cowardly, and unjust soul is next incarnated 'in the nature of a woman'?

<sup>24</sup> Tarrant (2017).

<sup>25</sup> Cf. in *R.* II 309.28–310.21. For the debate among the Platonists on this point, see Sorabji (2005), 213–16.

<sup>26</sup> *Phdo* 81e6–a1 εἰς τὰ τῶν ὄντων γένη καὶ τῶν τοιοῦτων θηρίων εἰκὸς ἐνδύεσθαι. *Rep.* 620c2–3 τὴν τοῦ γελωτοποιοῦ Θερσίτου πύθηκον ἐνδυσμένην.

<sup>27</sup> In *R.* II 310.18 τὸ ἄλογον ἔξωθεν ἐφειστώσα σχετικῶς.



## 4. CONCLUSION

Years ago Paul Thom argued that Aristotle's theory of reproduction was sexist in at least two ways.<sup>28</sup> First, it perpetuated women's oppression by aligning them with the passive, undefined and subordinate side of the form-matter distinction. Second – and perhaps relevant to the point at issue here – the theory could only have *appeared plausible* to Aristotle if he had regarded the culturally conditioned 'passivity' of Athenian women as an essential feature of feminine nature. But, in fact, there are features of his theory that really *ought* to have struck him as problematic given his other views. According to Aristotle's own views, a female offspring occurs when the semen fails to prevail over the matter (*GA* IV.1, 766b15). But matter is potentiality – and primitive matter especially so. So how can it happen that what is potential and primitive fails to be mastered by form? Given Aristotle's understanding of his own notions, this seems perplexing. Moreover, how can a natural process go 'wrong' *so often*? (About half the offspring are female, after all!) Aristotle defines natural changes as those that happen 'always or for the most part' (*Phys.* 198b34), so it is hard to see how there can be a regular defect in nature. Thom concluded that the obviousness he attributed to women's passive and subordinate role blinded Aristotle to the problems that his theory of reproduction created for his own natural philosophy and dulled the philosophical acuity that he exhibits in so many other areas. In short, Aristotle's sexism created a philosophical blind spot. It is perhaps not plausible to suppose that his theory of reproduction was elaborated with the *aim* of naturalising women's subordination, but perhaps his theory could not have looked plausible to him without his sexist pre-suppositions about the naturalness of women's subordination. Thom's argument is thus an instance of Hanlon's razor<sup>29</sup> or the maxim that one ought to assume 'cock-up before conspiracy'.

Proclus' resolution of the problem of *Timaeus* 46b–c and 90e is not perhaps as problematic in relation to the rest of his theory of gendered souls as Aristotle's reproductive theory is in relation to the rest of his natural philosophy. Yet it would be interesting to know more about the manner in which other Platonists treated these passages. Schultz points out that Proclus' classmate, Hermias, does not seem to lay similar stress on the relevance of the sex of the leading god for a soul in his *Phaedrus Commentary*.<sup>30</sup> Perhaps Proclus' views on reincarnation and on the nature of goddesses would have been different had he, rather

<sup>28</sup> Thom (1976).

<sup>29</sup> Never attribute to malice that which can be adequately explained by stupidity.

<sup>30</sup> Schultz (2018), 888, n. 11.

than Hermias, married Aedesia. Damascius tells us that the teacher of both Proclus and Hermias, Syrianus, tried to betroth Aedesia to his star pupil, Proclus.<sup>31</sup> But Proclus apparently had a dream which he took to mean that he would be married to Athena alone – i.e. to eschew human marriage and devote himself entirely to wisdom. So Hermias married Aedesia instead and she proved to be a most formidable and politically gifted woman, as well as one who cared greatly for the poor, and had many visions of the gods. Could Proclus' view of the nature of feminine souls have survived the experience of marriage to a woman so manifestly Demiurgic? The catch-cry of first-wave feminism was 'the personal is political'. Perhaps if Proclus' personal life had been different, his gender politics would have been better. But this, of course, must remain purely speculative.

<sup>31</sup> *Phil. Hist. Fr.* 56 (Athanasassiadi (1999)).

*Concerning the arguments in the fifth book of  
the Republic showing the virtues and education  
of men and women to be the same.*

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<I. PRELIMINARY: MEN AND WOMEN DO NOT  
DIFFER IN KIND: 236.5–238.10>

Since Socrates, in the fifth book of the *Republic*, wishes to show that  
political virtue does not belong to men alone, but is also common to  
women, he says that the education (*paideia*)<sup>32</sup> that is prior to virtue must  
necessarily be the same for men and women<sup>33</sup> – an education through  
*mousikê* and through physical training whose extent and character he  
has defined. Furthermore, even prior to the education, he shows the  
nature of both kinds (*genos*) [i.e. men and women] to be the same in  
form, for unless this point is firmly established, neither the arguments  
concerning education, nor those concerning virtue would have plau-  
sibility. It is, after all, necessary for education to be consequent upon  
nature, and for virtue to be consequent upon education, since the one  
perfects nature, while the other is the goal of education. And in these  
matters too it seems to me that Plato both knew and securely grounded  
the truth, when he established, on the one hand, that the male and the  
female are the same in species (*eidōs*) and determined, on the other,  
that since they were alike in form (*homoeidēs*), they possessed one virtue,  
just as they possessed one form.<sup>34</sup> For [one of two things is the case]:  
Either it is the case that, since intellect is the primary object of desire<sup>35</sup>  
and itself provides for each thing what it is to exist (*to einai*) and what it

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<sup>32</sup> For the elite education of late antiquity and its significance for Platonist philosophers, see volume 1 in this series, 30–2.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. 451e6–452a2.

<sup>34</sup> This following dialectic between Plato and his Aristotelian opponent is also reviewed briefly at *in Tim.* I 46.1–48.6 as Proclus comments on *Tim.* 18c1–4.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. *in Tim.* II 92.14 where Proclus uses similar terminology to describe Aristotle's view of the Prime Mover as the ultimate cause of motion by virtue of being an object of desire. Proclus' point in the single disjunctive statement that runs from 236.19–237.3 is that, whether one sides with Aristotle or with Plato on nature of the first principle, there must be a one-to-one correlation between essence and perfection and thus between essence and virtue.

is to exist well (*to eu einai*), when it gives things a single essence (*ousia*), it also surely gives them a single perfection. Or else there is, on the one hand, the Good beyond Intellect and, on the other, Intellect that is the cause of forms. In this case, it is necessary for their gifts to coincide, and the perfection which comes from the Good to be distributed along with the distribution of forms in accordance with merit, with the result that things that differ with respect to form (*kat' eidos*) will also differ with respect to doing well (*to eu*), while those that are essentially alike in form (*kat' ousian homoeidês*) have a virtue that is alike in form for all of them. Thus, as I said, Plato has arrived in the present [passage in Book V] with a form of words<sup>36</sup> that agrees with the order of existent things.

Among those who have come after Plato, however, some have said that the male and female are alike in form and called the human species (*eidos*) indivisible, while nonetheless separating the virtues, positing some for men and others for women. This is what the Peripatetics say.<sup>37</sup> Others make the virtues of men and women common (and that's no great surprise since they have extended a single virtue to both god and humanity), but nonetheless say that the male and female differ with respect to species, just as human and god do. That's what the Stoics do.<sup>38</sup>

But following the aforementioned rules (*kanôn*), it is necessary that whatever we have apprehended concerning the existence (*hyparxis*) of each thing with regard to sameness and difference, this too we apprehend concerning its perfection with regard to similarity and dissimilarity. For in every case, generally speaking, we see that the natural activities agree with the natures. In the case of the simple [bodies], upward motion belongs to all fire, while downward motion belongs to all earth, and similarly in the case of the intermediate [elements]. In the case of composites, such as living beings, however, each one – in as much as it has single form (*idea*) that results from its nature – also has a correspondingly single form of life, even if some of the individuals have more or less of what is common. For all lions are courageous, all cattle

<sup>36</sup> κἀνταῦθα τῇ τάξει τῶν ὄντων συμβαινούσας ἀφῆκεν φωνάς. The choice of φωνάς in this context seems a bit odd. Perhaps Proclus has in mind the care that Socrates takes about properly qualified terminology at *Rep.* V 454a.

<sup>37</sup> The literature on Aristotle and feminism is, of course, immense, but Deslauriers (2003) seems most salient to assessing the accuracy of the position that Proclus here attributes to Aristotle and his school.

<sup>38</sup> This characterisation of the Stoic view of women and their virtue is not included in von Arnim's *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta* and it in fact seems contrary to the reports in *SVF* III 253 and 254. On the Stoic view of women, their virtue and their fitness for political life, see Asmis (1996) and, somewhat less optimistically, Engel (2003).

are temperate, all cranes are endowed with intelligence<sup>39</sup> and in other cases the same account (*logos*) holds – even if, as we said, in this or that situation there is a certain intensification or slackness [of the quality in question]. This [degree of variation] in their activities is itself certainly evidence of their similarity with respect to form, for the greater and the lesser exists among what is the same in form.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, it is surely the case since all humans are alike in form, they will possess the same perfections and [the same] natural activities, just as they possess the [same] natures. But that they have the same [natures] with respect to form is obvious from both the fact that they reproduce with one another naturally (and it is not like the case of hybrids,<sup>41</sup> such as [the result of] a horse and an ass) and the fact that, while they differ in their bodily organs for reproduction, both men and women nonetheless have the same ways of life (*bios*). They are self-controlled or undisciplined, cowardly or courageous, wise or witless. There is a change only with respect to the aforementioned [reproductive] parts when the transformation of male into female or female into male takes place (as has already become a familiar fact from narratives (*historia*)), while beings that are not the same in form cannot change into one another without perishing.<sup>42</sup>

<II. THE TWIN OBJECTIVES OF THE LAWMAKER:  
POSSIBILITY AND BENEFIT: 238.11–239.27>

Thus since Socrates knew these things and since he wished to exhibit the fact that the virtues are common to both men and women, and that there ought to be not merely guardians, but also guardianesses<sup>43</sup> of the same rank as them, and not merely auxiliaries who are men, but that there should also be women bearing arms, he showed that on the basis of necessary [reasoning] it was *possible* to legislate this. He also showed that, when this law holds force, it is *beneficial* to those who have been persuaded [of it]. These, after all, are the two objectives of all political knowledge: showing which among the things prescribed is, on the one hand, possible and which is, on the other, beneficial. For the lawgiver who has intelligence would neither deem it necessary to write down

<sup>39</sup> The same examples are given in Olympiodorus, in *Phdo* 8.2.4–5.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Aristotle *Metaphys.* 1054b7.

<sup>41</sup> Cf. in *Tim.* II 202.11–20 for Proclus' understanding of hybrids.

<sup>42</sup> Examples from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* alone would include Tiresias, Sithon, Mestra, Iphis, and Cainis/Caineus. See Brisson (2002).

<sup>43</sup> Echoing Plato's feminine noun at *Rep.* 457c1. Repeated again at 242.27 and in his summary of the arrangements in the *Republic* at in *Tim.* I 46.14.

what is merely a pious hope<sup>44</sup> nor – even when it comes to what he says is possible<sup>45</sup> – to write [the law] by looking to anything other than what is beneficial.<sup>46</sup> And reasonably so, for the legislative [art] is a partial intellect, and this is why he [Plato] defines the law as ‘a distribution of intellect’.<sup>47</sup> If it is an Intellect, it has the third rank after the Good, but the second after the Power.<sup>48</sup> After all, every intellect requires power in order to completely fulfil that which is its own. But it is not the case that where there is power, there is intellect too. As a consequence, power is naturally beyond intellect. It was with an eye to these facts that Socrates defined every sort of knowledge and every craft to be some kind of power, but not vice versa. For he says that in the case of power he ‘cannot see either colour or shape’, but instead [he proposes] to discover the differences among them by reference to what gets accomplished by it

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<sup>44</sup> οὐτε γὰρ εὐχᾷς ὅμοια δεῖ γράφειν τὸν νοῦν ἔχοντα νομοθέτην. Cf. *Rep.* 456b12 Οὐκ ἄρα ἀδυνατὰ γε οὐδὲ εὐχᾷς ὅμοια ἐνομοθετοῦμεν.

<sup>45</sup> οὐτ’ εἰ καὶ δυνατὰ λέγοι. As Festugière notes, the sense cannot be exactly the normal one of ‘even if’ or ‘although’.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. *Rep.* 456c4.

<sup>47</sup> The following discussion would be opaque to any audience that was not thoroughly familiar with Plato’s *Laws*. At 713b in that work the Athenian Stranger narrates the story of the best form of government instituted long ago in the age of Cronos. The god, doubting humans’ ability to govern themselves, appointed as rulers over them super-human beings intermediate between gods and men: the *daimones*. This story already exploits etymological connections to render its narrative plausible. The presence of a *daimôn* in charge of things is readily suggested by the happiness (*eudaimonia*) of these communities in the long-ago age of Cronos (713b1–3 ἐτι προτέρᾳ τούτων πάμπλου λέγεταί τις ἀρχὴ τε καὶ οἰκῆσις γεγενῆσθαι ἐπὶ Κρόνου μάλ’ εὐδαίμων). Now a super-human *daimôn* is of course immortal. So in the present age, we will best imitate the golden era of Cronos by ordering both our homes and our city-state in accordance with the immortal element within ourselves – *nous* or intellect. And it is on this basis that Plato gives the ‘definition’ of law (*nomos*) that occupies Proclus in what follows: it is τὴν τοῦ νοῦ διανομὴν (714a1–2). Now, as Bury’s translation in the Loeb Classical Library pointed out long ago, this involves double word-play on *nous/nomos* and *dianomê/daimôn*. And in the context of this passage from the *Laws*, the word *dianomê* is perhaps best rendered in the second sense listed in LSJ – that of *regulation*. Indeed, LSJ lists precisely this passage from Plato as an example of that sense: the law is a regulation patterned upon intellect. But the discussion that ensues in Proclus plays on the other sense of *dianomê* as a *distribution* or division of things, for it stresses the order in which the creative power of the Good is unfolded into the series Power and Intellect.

<sup>48</sup> It seems likely that Proclus is here playing with a variation of the Father–Power–Intellect triad associated with some Neoplatonists’ understanding of the *Chaldean Oracles* (cf. Proclus, in *Alc.* I 37.14 = Iamblichus, in *Alc.* I, fr. 4 (Dillon)). By invoking this familiar triad, Proclus seeks to provide a metaphysical justification for Socrates’ common-sense remark that a good lawmaker asks both what is possible (i.e. what lies within our power) and what is beneficial (i.e. good).

or what it is oriented toward.<sup>49</sup> When it is a question of what results from it, then it is a creative power, and when it is a question of what it is oriented toward, then it is a cognitive power. Thus all understanding (*gnôsis*) results from power, but not every power is entirely concerned with understanding (*gnôstikos*). (In any case, there are desiderative and other natural powers that belong to animals or plants or things that lack soul.) As a consequence, Power is above Intellect.

The Good in turn is beyond Power. In every case, power itself by itself is good, and if it is said that there is something that is harmful but simultaneously power, then it [merely] appears to be power to some people, while being much more [a kind of] incapacity.<sup>50</sup> For what else is the distinctive feature of Power but to preserve the one who possesses it? If there is some power that is harmful, it would not [really] be power [at all], since it produces the opposite of what power is used for. Therefore, all power is good, but not all that is good is power, since in fact there exist other things that are good whilst not being powers. [And there are] since we say that some dispositions are good, and we also say that of the activities that are prior to the dispositions,<sup>51</sup> as well as that the Being itself that is prior to Power is good. If we say these things correctly and if what was said earlier is true – that the legislative science is a kind of partial intellect because, as Plato said, the law is a distribution of intellect – then since it [sc. intellect] is third in the series among all the things that exist, it [sc. political science] is obliged to look toward that which is prior to it (I mean both Power and the Good). After all, there are series<sup>52</sup> for these things too, with some powers proceeding from

<sup>49</sup> Proclus alludes here to Socrates' discussion of the faculties (or powers) of knowledge and belief at 477c. These powers turn out to be distinguished both by their objects (knowledge is 'set over' what entirely is, while opinion is set over what is and is not) and by what they accomplish (knowledge accomplishes its ends infallibly, while opinion does so fallibly). See Essay 10 below, 266.9, ff.

<sup>50</sup> A familiar theme from the *Gorgias*; cf. Olympiodorus in *Grg.* 15.3, 28–30: οὕτως καὶ οἱ ῥήτορες καὶ ἐπὶ κακῷ τῇ δυνάμει κεχρημένοι οὐ λέγονται δύνασθαι ἀλλὰ μᾶλλον ἀδυναμίαν ἀσκοῦσιν.

<sup>51</sup> As Festugière notes, Kroll's correction of ἀπὸ ἔξεων to πρὸ ἔξεων, with reference to Aristotle, *NE* 2.1103b21 is sound. Virtues are surely good dispositions that are salient to the discussion at hand and the Neoplatonists do not take Aristotle to be at odds with Plato in thinking that activity or habituation is relevant to the inculcation of virtue. This is particularly true of the second grade of virtue: ethical virtue. Cf. Olympiodorus, in *Phdo* 8.2.1–3.

<sup>52</sup> For the notion of a series in Neoplatonism, see Lloyd (1990), 76–123 for the perspective from logic and semantics and Remes (2008), 44–76 for the perspective from metaphysics.

25 other powers, and similarly for goodnesses.<sup>53</sup> If political science looks to these things, then it is obliged to consider in every situation both the possible<sup>54</sup> when it comes to choice, and the beneficial when it comes to attainment. After all, each and every person chooses among the things that are possible and desires to bring about things that are beneficial.

<III. THE FEMINIST PROPOSAL IS POSSIBLE:

239.28–246.21>

<A. The positive argument: 239.28–242.9>

240 Since these are the two objectives [viz. possibility and benefit], Socrates initially displays to us the possibility of the feminist doctrine<sup>55</sup> by calling to mind, by analogy with dogs, the similarity of women to men when it comes to guarding the city. For surely he made this animal an image (*eikôn*) of guardianly nature, since it naturally possesses this power as other animals naturally possess other powers, with some being naturally such as to have the power of foreseeing the future, others naturally

<sup>53</sup> The plural ‘goodnesses’ (*agathotêtes*) is somewhat jarring, but Proclus seems to have in mind the series of gods which are described in *Elements of Theology* 119.11 as ἐνάδες καὶ ἀγαθότητες. Dodds translates this as ‘excellences’, but it seems that the gods as ἀγαθότητες are parallel to the gods as the participated mode of the unparticipated One or *henads*. If ‘the Good’ is Goodness, then each of the series that it transcends are similarly headed by ‘goodnesses’.

<sup>54</sup> English has no easy way of exhibiting the continuity between what Proclus has just been discussing (the power or *dynamis* that is alleged to be prior to intellect) and what we look to in making choices (the possible or *to dynaton*).

<sup>55</sup> τὸ δυνατὸν πρότερον ὁ Σωκράτης ἡμῖν ἐπιδεικνύς τοῦ γυναικείου δόγματος. The adjective *gynaikeios* would normally be rendered ‘feminine’, not ‘feminist’. In its neutral sense, it commonly describes things associated with women; e.g. feminine dress or the women’s marketplace. In its evaluative sense, it is frequently negative – as in Socrates’ infamous remark later in this book of the *Republic* that despoiling the enemy dead on the battlefield is a sign of ‘a petty and womanish cast of mind’ (γυναικείας τε καὶ σμικρᾶς διανοίας, 469d7). But what is at issue in this passage from Proclus is the doctrine or belief that women can participate in the same virtues as men and accordingly can benefit the city-state in similar ways. In that context, we think ‘feminist’ rather than ‘feminine’ better expresses in English the sense of what Proclus seeks to convey. We know of no earlier use of the adjective to convey what we should call a ‘feminist doctrine’.

Festugière translates: ‘Tels étant donc les buts, Socrate nous montre en premier la possibilité de sa décision relativement aux femmes ...’ This converts the adjective to a noun and makes the dogma one that pertains to the class that falls under the noun. Perhaps his choice reflects the fact that Proclus has gone for a somewhat ambiguous expression here, a bit like saying ‘female-theory’ in English. Is that a theory *held by* women or *about* women? Perhaps it would have struck Proclus’ audience with something of the strangeness of ‘feminism(e)’ when it was coined in French and English in the early twentieth century.



having the power of managing the household, and yet others being naturally pugnacious.<sup>56</sup> But the distinctive feature of this power [of being a guardian] is to be gentle with those who belong to the household, but to be tough on outsiders<sup>57</sup> – a feature that doubtless belongs to dogs in particular, just as surely as being wakeful<sup>58</sup> does (for when they are sleeping, yet another guard is necessarily required for this one) and also being keen and possessing a quick sensibility. After all, were the dog lacking in these qualities, then, having failed to detect the approach of the outsiders, he would not welcome [their presence] or repel them prior to any further experience of them – in the one case because of weak perception, in the other because of laziness.<sup>59</sup> It seems, furthermore,

<sup>56</sup> Swans are perhaps the iconic animals for foreseeing the future; cf. *Phdo* 84e–85b. Bees might be Proclus' notion of paradigmatically good household managers, since when the household gets too big they send out colonies (*Pol.* 293d, *Laws* 708b). The distinction between the guardianly (*phylaktikos*) species and the pugnacious ones (*amynikos*) is unclear. As Festugière notes, Aristotle draws a distinction between the pugnacious and the guardianly (*phylaktikos*) at *HA* I.1, 488b9, and explains that the former either attack other animals or fight back when attacked, while the latter merely have the means of fighting back against ill treatment. But Aristotle does not give us examples. Perhaps Proclus distinguishes these on the basis of Socrates' insistence that the human counter-parts to guard dogs must not prey upon the flock that they are introduced to protect (*Rep.* 416a). If this guess is correct, then it may be wolves that are the icon of the pugnacious power, for Socrates contrasts the guard dogs with their close cousin, the wolf.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. *Rep.* 375e.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. 95.20 below. The wakeful dog turns out to be a philosophical animal in more than one way.

<sup>59</sup> ὁ γὰρ τούτοις ἐλλείπων οὐ προσιόντας γνώσεται τοὺς ἀλλοτρίους, οὐ χαίρησι καὶ ἀποσκειάσεται πρὸ τοῦ παθεῖν, τὸ μὲν διὰ δυσαισθησίαν, τὸ δὲ δι' ἀργίαν. Like Festugière, we reject Kroll's proposal to read αἰρήσει for χαίρησι in line 11. As Festugière notes, this digression is surely related to Socrates' observations on dogs at *Rep.* 376a5 since Proclus offers a close paraphrase of the Platonic text. As he observes: 'le chien ὃν μὲν ἂν ἴδῃ ἀγνώστα, χαλεπαίνει (ici ἀποσκειάσεται), οὐδὲ ἐν κακὸν προπεπονθὼς (ici πρὸ τοῦ παθεῖν)· ὃν δ' ἂν γνώριμον, ἀσπάζεται (ici χαίρησι), καὶ μὴδὲν πώποτε ὑπ' αὐτοῦ ἀγαθὸν πεπόνθη.' Retaining χαίρησι, he translates: 'car si un chien l'était déficient en ces qualités, il ne percevrait pas les étrangers dès leur approche, il ne se réjouirait pas, ou ne repousserait pas les gens, avant même d'en avoir rien éprouvé, dans le premier cas, par lenteur à percevoir, dans le second par paresse.' The sentence is confusing at first glance, because one expects the μὲν ... δὲ coordination to be related to the alternatives of welcoming [those who are familiar] or repelling those who are not. After all, the καὶ in οὐ χαίρησι καὶ ἀποσκειάσεται must express disjunction, not conjunction since the dog cannot both welcome *and* repel the person at the front gate. But that's not what the μὲν ... δὲ refers to. In fact, this reaches back to the first and second of the two qualities just attributed – wakefulness and keen sensibilities. The point is that when the dog fails to *either* wag at familiars or bark at strangers it is either because he fails to perceive them due to poor perception or fails to exercise perception at all since he is sleeping. In the first case, perhaps, we should imagine an old dog who is awake but nearly deaf and in the second a dog who is fast asleep.

15 that it is because of these facts that those who are wise in divine matters, when they discerned this guardian property to be distinctive of dogs, interpreted them as belonging to the protective order of gods and made them dog-headed in their forms, as the Egyptians do with Anubis who guards Osiris.<sup>60</sup> In any case, Socrates <compares><sup>61</sup> the human guardians with dogs due to the natural affinity with the genus of protective daemons.<sup>62</sup>

20 Starting out from here, he demonstrates that being a guardian of the city-state is a role that belongs not only to the male among humans, but to the female as well. For while the female dogs are no less able to be guardians of the herds than the male, [Socrates' conclusion] is not reasoning from an example<sup>63</sup> (for such a mode of apprehension (*epibolê*) is

<sup>60</sup> The idea that Anubis' dog-head is appropriate to his role as protector of Isis and Osiris is found earlier in Plutarch's *De Iside et Osiride* (357f) and Diodorus Siculus (1.87.2). These authors share a simpler sentiment that the role of dogs as faithful guards and companions makes a canine appearance appropriate to the guarding deity. Proclus has adapted this slightly to his own understanding of divine chains under which objects appear at a low level, but still reflecting the characteristics of the deities that preside over them.

<sup>61</sup> Reading παρεικάζει in the lacuna at line 18 with Kroll.

<sup>62</sup> Festugière comments: 'Pure invention, naturellement, de Proclus.' Kroll refers the reader to his *Or. Chald.* 45 (= fr. 90 and 91 in the editions of Des Place and Majercik), but Festugière points out that these canine daemons are *irrational* and thus hardly seem apposite to the protective role ascribed to them here by Proclus. Even if dog-like protective daemons are not a pure invention on Proclus' part, the notion is one that remains mysterious to us given our evidence.

<sup>63</sup> οὐκ ἐκ παραδείγματος ἐπιβαλλόμενος (ἀσθενὴς γὰρ ὁ τοιόσδε τῆς ἐπιβολῆς τρόπος καὶ οὐ διαλεκτικός) οὐδὲ ὡς ἐπαγωγῇ χρώμενος (ἐκ γὰρ ἐνὸς ἐπαγωγὴν ποιεῖν ἀδύνατον), ἀλλ' ὡς ἐκ τοῦ ἥττονος ἐπιχειρῶν. The initial contrast between inference from a paradigm and using one case as the basis for an induction is puzzling. Moreover, Proclus' choice of the participle ἐπιβαλλόμενος may lead the unwary reader down a blind alley (as it did us for a while). Alexander of Aphrodisias reports allegedly Stoic terminology of suppressed and suppressing syllogisms at *in An. Pr.* 283.12, ff. (= SVF 2.257: οἱ δὲ ἐπιβάλλοντές τε καὶ ἐπιβαλλόμενοι καλούμενοι). In suppressed reasoning we take multiple pairs of premises and, instead of inferring the conclusion that follows from each pair, we conjoin them to draw a conclusion from all of them. Thus, in Alexander's example: 'if we were to take A of B, B of C, C of D, D of E, so that A of E. For in this case we take continuous premisses and do not further draw the conclusions which come from them, but we use all of them as if the conclusion AE followed from all of them in the same way' Mueller (2006). The syllogisms of which the conclusions are omitted are called 'suppressed' (ἐπιβαλλόμενος). But since we are not given premises here but rather an exemplar, it is difficult to see how this technical sense can be apposite.

We think that focusing on the participle is thus a mistake. The contrast should in fact be understood simply by reference to Aristotle's theory of rhetoric. Rhetorical and dialectical reasoning have a kind of symmetry between them. The rhetorical counter-part to syllogism is *enthymeme*, while induction's counter-part is example or *paradeigma* (*Rhet.* 1356a34–19). The difference between these is perhaps not as

weak and not dialectical), nor does he use it as the basis for an induction (for it is not possible to make an induction from a single case). Rather, it attempts a proof from what is lesser, so that the argument goes like this: If it falls to those things that are less than humans due to the decline (*hypthesis*) of their kind of life to possess the natural similarity [between the sexes], the similarity in nature will belong to a much greater extent to human beings who have a superior and clearer kind of life. For among things that are essentially superior, there is a greater commonality of nature between those that have the same rank than there is among inferior beings. And of course, to the extent that individuals [of a kind] are by nature deficient relative to what is prior to them, to that extent they are lacking in similarity relative to one another and participate more in dissimilarity.<sup>64</sup> However, the antecedent holds, since surely dogs are, on the one hand, very close to humans and live with them, but, on the other, inferior to them due to lacking reason. Yet it is not only the males, but also the females that have been allocated the property that we say is distinctive of dogs. In the case of human beings, therefore, who possess as their distinctive (*idios*) quality the faculty of watching over their fellow human beings and preserving them, because of the common possession of reason, it must be even more the case that it falls to all of them to possess this nature which is bound (*opheilein*)

obvious as Aristotle supposed, but that is irrelevant to the question of whether Proclus takes there to be a difference between them: Aristotle's authority in this matter is certainly sufficient to explain the contrast drawn in this passage.

But while Aristotle's *Rhetoric* allows us to understand the otherwise mysterious contrast between the first two options, we would fail to appreciate Proclus' creativity if we simply took his argument ἐκ τοῦ ἥττονος as a simple example of the rhetorical trope ἐκ τοῦ μᾶλλον καὶ ἥττον (*Rhet.* 1397b12–19). As Aristotle's examples show, this strategy argues from what is undisputably true but harder to believe to a conclusion that is less difficult to believe but disputed. Thus, if it's true that a man beats *even his parents* (incredible though such hybris might be!), then it is highly credible that he beats his neighbours too. If it's true that *even the gods* don't know all things (incredible though this might be), it is highly credible that there are things unknown to *men*. In short, the 'more and less' in Aristotle's rhetorical trope is *epistemological* – a matter of degrees of probability. Proclus' reconstruction of Socrates' argument, however, treats more and less in terms of *degrees of being*. From what is true of male and female dogs (which are lower on the chain of being) we may infer things about humans (who are more real).

<sup>64</sup> That is to say, 'vertical' and 'horizontal' similarity correlate; cf. *ET* 28 and 32 for vertical similarity. Thus, souls are further from the One than intellects are and so the extent to which souls resemble the One is less than the extent to which intellects do. (So intellectual thinking or *noësis* is 'all at once', while the soul's discursive thought is the less unified 'one thing after another'.) Commensurate with the increasing dissimilarity to higher causes that goes with different degrees of vertical separation, there is a greater dissimilarity within a class of beings at a level. Thus there is greater diversity among souls than there is among intellects.

to preserve the species, even if some have it to a greater and some to a lesser degree. [Socrates] also adds, in a manner that is daemonically inspired (*daimonôn*) the following fact which contributes toward producing conviction in the uni-form (*homoeidês*) essence of human beings (456d), for even Aristotle said that ‘the more and the less’ pertains to what is alike in species (*homoeidês*) – for example, in light and dark or hot and cold.<sup>65</sup> That which does not at all participate in the same form is not said to do so to a greater or lesser extent, but rather this is said where something participates in the same form though more or less intensely. If, then, some people participate to a greater degree and others to a lesser degree in the *perfection* appropriate to being human, nonetheless the *nature* is common between males and females, and all the occupations (*epitêdeuma*) will be common to both, whether being a guardian, being an auxiliary, or living the life of a craftsman. As a result, it is necessary to examine which among the women have guardianly natures, and it is necessary to educate those that have it in the same manner as men, for the natural aptitude (*epitêdeiotês*) is incomplete, but education leads nature to completeness. And even if the female should be weaker with respect to these things than the male, to speak about whole classes, we will not separate [the two], for it is necessary to look not to the limbs but to the forms of life. Yet upon reflection,<sup>66</sup> the achievements of nations composed entirely of women show the power in women’s limbs – I mean [for example] the Amazons who, due to their strength, were called the companions of Ares and honoured as ‘Ares-like’ after their defeat at Athens.<sup>67</sup> Or the Sarmatian women who were no less warlike than the men and audacious in terrifying situations.<sup>68</sup> And I have heard that the constitution of the Lusitanians allocates the wool-making and weaving to the men, but war and competition to the women.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Aristotle, *PA* I.4, 644a16–22: ‘Groups that only differ in degree, and in the more or less of an identical element that they possess, are aggregated under a single class; groups whose attributes are only analogous are separated. For instance, bird differs from bird by gradation, or by excess and defect – some birds have long feathers, others short ones. Bird and Fish only agree in having analogous organs; for what in the bird is feather, in the fish is scale’ (trans. W. Ogle in Barnes (1984)).

<sup>66</sup> καίτοι καί; cf. Denniston and Dover (1954), 560–1.

<sup>67</sup> Plutarch, *Theseus* 27.1–5.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. *Laws* 804e, 806b. However, it seems plausible that Proclus may have in mind Herodotus’ tale of the origins of the Sarmatians (4.110–17) who are the result of intermarriage between the Amazons and the Scythians. So while Festugière seems right to deny that Kroll’s citation of Herodotus 2.35 is apposite, this does not mean that stories from Herodotus are in no way relevant.

<sup>69</sup> As Festugière notes, the passages to which Kroll refers do not quite match what Proclus reports about the Lusitanians. Herodotus ascribes similar customs to the Egyptians (2.35) and Strabo makes some general statements about the ferocity of Iberian women

Consequently, the human nature that has come about as a result of the work of the Demiurge is equivalent when it comes to virtue.

<B. Objections and replies: 242.10–245.12>

Such is the argument through which he [Socrates] shows that there is a common nature for men and women in all occupations. Having set in motion two objections to this doctrine, he managed both of them in a way that manifests knowledge.<sup>70</sup> The first objection leads the proposal from what is customary (*ethos*) to something that is not generally accepted (*adoxos*), since this is what those who waste time over contradictions and who go hunting among the arguments for what is generally accepted (*endoxon*) are apt to do.<sup>71</sup> Since the second [objection] takes its impetus from things that we ourselves have agreed, it seems to have more force and to involve refutation of our own arguments by ourselves.<sup>72</sup>

The argument that goes from what is customary to a position that is not generally accepted is as follows: If it is necessary for women to

(3.165), but the source which combined these tropes, on which Proclus drew, appears to be lost.

<sup>70</sup> τὸν ἐπιστημονικὸν τρόπον. As Festugière points out, Socrates' replies to these objections are presented as syllogistic reasoning (243.11; 244.11). But it would be too much to suppose that Proclus thinks that Socrates' replies convey *epistêmê* in the full-blooded Aristotelian sense of the conclusion of a demonstrative syllogism. It is implausible to suppose that the premises in the syllogisms attributed to Socrates in his responses meet the further requirements for demonstration.

<sup>71</sup> καὶ τὸ ἐνδοξον θηρῶσιν ἐν τοῖς λόγοις. Cf. in *Prm.* 635.18–20 ἡ τοπικὴ μόνοις προσήκουσα τοῖς τὸ ἐνδοξον θηρῶσιν. In the latter passage it is clear that it is the Aristotelian sense of 'dialectic' that is being judged as inferior to the dialectical exercise employed by Parmenides in Plato's dialogue. That Aristotelian sense of dialectic involves reasoning on the basis of *endoxa* or claims that are generally accepted (by the wise or those worth taking seriously); cf. *Top.* I.1. 100a29–b23. The language of *hunting*, however, recalls one of the divisions of sophistry in Plato's *Sophist* (223b5) that the Platonic tradition saw fit to enshrine in the *Definitions* (415c9): Σοφιστὴς νέων πλουσίων ἐνδόξων ἑμισθοῦς θηρευτῆς. Here, of course, *endoxos* takes a different sense – the sophist hunts wealthy and *well-born* young men. Does Proclus want his very well-read audience – people who know their Plato and Aristotle backwards and forwards – to associate the practice of Aristotelian dialectic with sophistry? We think it is telling that this sly dig at hunters of *endoxa* occurs twice.

<sup>72</sup> περιτρεπτική τῶν λόγων αὐτῶν πρὸς αὐτούς. An argument that is *peritreptikos* in the strict sense is a self-refutation argument. This is the fate the befalls the sceptic who authoritatively asserts that 'No one knows anything'. For the terminology and the argument strategy of strict self-refutation arguments, see Burnyeat (1976). In spite of Proclus' word choice here, the argument is not strictly a self-refutation. Socrates merely combats the appearance that what was said earlier about correlating occupations with natures is inconsistent with assigning men and women the same occupations.

become guardians, then it is necessary for them to undergo physical training and not merely to undergo cultural education. But if it is necessary for them to undergo physical training, it is also necessary for them to exercise in the nude, just as the men do, and to submit to all the other things that the men do: for instance, the high jump, riding horses, or running. However, the custom that currently prevails in city-states  
 25 says that all these things are shameful for women. But the shameful and unseemly are not generally accepted (*adoxos*). Therefore women ought not do physical training. Hence one ought not arrange for there to be female guardians of the city-state.

The other objection goes like this: It was laid down through the arguments considered before that it is necessary for each one to have  
 243 some occupation which accords with the nature of each individually. But if this is correct, then it is necessary for those with different natures to have different occupations. Thus if men and women differ from one another in their natures, then they will also differ naturally in their  
 5 occupations. Therefore the male and female nature have different occupations. Thus if male nature is such as to be a guardian, then female nature is not such as to be a guardian, for it is not possible to affirm both [the following] things at the same time: that the natures differ and that the occupations are the same. Consequently, either we falsely determined the previous matters or else we falsely prove the matters currently at hand.

While these are the objections brought forth in this manner in  
 10 Socrates' presence, he resolves both of them, with the syllogistic reasoning in the first case going like this: Women exercising or stripping naked with the men or riding horses or practising other such things is contrary to common custom. Everything contrary to common custom  
 15 is unseemly and shameful. And the conclusion that follows is obvious. But he resolves this objection in this way, showing that the major premise is unstable.<sup>73</sup> After all, common custom is two-fold – for one, reason is the father, but for the other, passion (*pathos*) is the cause. What is shameful is also two-fold: there is that which appears that way to those who are possessed of intellect and there is that which appears shameful to those who are lacking in intellect. What is not generally accepted  
 20 (*adoxos*) is two-fold too in a correspondingly similar manner: there is what is not generally accepted by the many and there is that which is

<sup>73</sup> τὴν μείζω πρότασιν σαλεύσας. It is somewhat puzzling that Proclus does not use the standard terminology for 'equivocal' (*homonymia*) as he does in Essay 9 at 252.10, for this is surely the accusation against the premise. The language of 'instability' is used more broadly against both of the unsound arguments in the presentation in Essay 9; cf. 251.8.

not generally accepted by the elite.<sup>74</sup> Thus if reason were the leader of common custom, then even if it should appear to be unseemly to those lacking in intellect and even if it should not be generally accepted by the many, it ought nonetheless be introduced to city-states, for this too will, in time, be congenial to everyone. But if passion is what is the cause of the common custom, then even though it should appear to be a fine thing (*kalon*) to those who are lacking in intellect and even if it should be generally accepted by the many due to the fact that it's been done that way for a long time, [the practice] ought nonetheless be cast out from city-states. After all, the art of legislation does not aim at the judgement of the many, but rather of the few, nor does it look to the opinions of those lacking intellect but instead looks to the opinions of those who have it. Therefore [this art] will indeed legislate things that are not generally accepted (*ta adoxa*) among the many since it looks to the things that are generally accepted (*ta endoxa*) among the few. For if it were necessary to be enslaved to useless customs, change would never come about, since the inferior [customs] that came before would always hold sway. Thus it is necessary to reason syllogistically as follows: Some customs do not harmonise with one another. Things that are in accordance with reason do harmonise with one another. Therefore not all customs are in accordance with reason. Thus, since not all [customs] are in accordance with reason, one ought to select, not those that seem fine (*kalon*) from the point of view of imagination (*phantasia*), but rather those that are due to the judgement of reason. Thus he resolved the first objection in this way, as well as recalling facts from history where many customs that were previously thought to be shameful were no longer thought to be such with the passage of time, as, for instance, [the practice] among the Spartans of running [races] without a loincloth.

The second objection reasons syllogistically in the following way: Male and female natures are different. It falls to different natures to have different occupations. He resolves it after distinguishing the various ways in which 'different' is meant. On the one hand, there is different in some respect, while in another sense there is different *simpliciter*. It is not with respect to that in which they differ that we assign to them the same occupation, but rather with respect to that in which they do not differ [that we do so]. For there is a difference between men and women with respect to the position and shape of the reproductive organs, and in this respect it is necessary for men to attend to some things and women to others. The men ought to practise exercises whereby, through such a type of nutrition and motion, they produce seed that

<sup>74</sup> ἡ τὸ τοῖς πολλοῖς, ἡ τὸ τοῖς περιττοῖς. The opposition with 'the many' requires that we give τοῖς περιττοῖς the specific sense of LSJ A.3; cf. Aristotle, *Metaphys.* I.1, 983a3.



is strong and not inert or degraded. (For Aristotle says that when it comes to seeds, those that are liquidy are infertile, while those that are solid and granular are potent)<sup>75</sup> \*\*\* while others ought to attend to pursuits that are specifically for women who are pregnant, such as those that Plato enjoins in the *Laws*:<sup>76</sup> exercise, abstaining from wine, and if there are other things like this. Thus while they do differ in this respect, they do not differ when it comes to the powers of the soul in accordance with which it is necessary that they should pursue the same things, even if women in general engage in these pursuits with a greater degree of weakness. Moreover, it is clear that many of them are more formidable in all kinds of education than some men are. Therefore, it is not the respect in which they differ that is the one by virtue of which we define the pursuits that are common to them. Rather, it is by virtue of that respect in which they have a common nature. He made clear the flawed reasoning (*paralogismos*) that treats '[different] in a certain respect' and '[different] *simpliciter*' as not differing in any way, when he employed [the parallel case of] the man with hair and the man who is bald as having a different nature and [thus] obliged not to pursue the same things (454c). There is something different in these [cases], but this is not a quality that makes a difference to their pursuits. Generally speaking, then, within everything that is composite there is inevitably something that is the same and inevitably something that is different, and it is not necessary to say either that what is different in a certain respect is different *simpliciter* nor to say that what is the same in a certain respect is the same *simpliciter*.

<C. Coda on female weakness – human and divine: 245.13–246.21>

Thus the objections were resolved by him in this manner, and when he had resolved them he concluded that it is necessary for both men and women to have the same pursuits. However, for those things which the men and women pursue, he also concluded that it is necessary to give

<sup>75</sup> Cf. *HA* VII.1 582a19–33. 583a5–14 correlates the quality of seed with factors such as diet or corpulence that one could plausibly attend to, but also to factors such as being swarthy that seem beyond the reach of behaviour to change. Radermacher was doubtless correct to identify a lacuna following, though not very much appears to be missing. Proclus' general point (that men's and women's exercises should differ in so far as they serve different ends for reproductive health) is clear.

<sup>76</sup> Festugière corrects and expands the references given by Kroll. The relevant passages in the *Laws* seem to be III 674b, VI 775b–c, VII 789a–e. The first passage counsels both men and women to refrain from drinking before attempts to procreate in general, while the second specifically mentions the wedding night. The third passage mentions a form of physical training for the foetus that results from pregnant women walking.



the women lighter tools, since they are not as strong, and to assign such tasks as would not utterly exhaust them due to the slackening (*hyphesis*) of their nature in all things. After all, among what are agreed to be feminine tasks, a man acts more formidably than a woman – for example, in the act of weaving or making wool or making sacrificial cakes (*popanon*). And on this last point, he taught us the Attic custom, since women did not merely fulfil the ritual office of grinding the corn, but were also those who made the cakes, imitating the fabricating natures which shape all the plants and animals which people send up to the gods.<sup>77</sup> Thus, across the range of all of these female tasks men are stronger than women in relation to doing the same things. Consequently, it is no surprise if this is the case too in being a hoplite or running or in keeping watch.<sup>78</sup> Nonetheless one must order women to share in these occupations in common with men, compensating for the diminution in nature by dint of the relative lightness of their tasks. And this also seems to apply to the female in the analogous case of things that are divine, since they extend their own [distinctive] natures as far as the last [levels of existence]. Among these [divine beings], while the female divinities belong to the same order as the male, they are inferior by virtue of their powers. Because they have been ranked alongside one another (which is why they belong to the same order), they possess in common the powers that elevate things toward their own causes. Now this is surely what he [Socrates] reveals iconically with the virtues being common down here.

<sup>77</sup> ὥς ἄρα γυναῖκες ἦσαν οὐχ αἱ ἀλετριδὲς μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ αἱ ποτπανοποιοί, μιμούμεναι τὰς φύσεις τὰς πλαττούσας ὅσα τοῖς θεοῖς ἀνίσιν ζῶα καὶ φυτά. Both the sense and significance of this aside on Proclus' part is obscure. ἀλετρις occurs in Homer simply in the sense of a female slave who grinds the corn, but LSJ also lists a specifically Athenian sense of a noble woman who bakes cakes used in sacrifices (cf. Aristophanes *Thes.* 285 where such cakes are offered to Demeter and Persephone). This sacred baking also appears at *Lysistrata* 643, in an interesting passage running through the religious activities fulfilled by an aristocratic Athenian woman at different ages. The information in LSJ about the *popana* must come from the very useful scholion on Aristophanes (*Scholia in Lysistratam* 643.14 γίνονται δέ τινες τῶν εὐ γεγονυῖων ἀλετριδὲς τῇ θεῷ παρθένῳ, αἵτινες τὰ εἰς τὴν θυσίαν πόπανα ἀλοῦσι· καὶ ἔστιν ἔντιμον τοῦτο. ἦσαν δὲ καὶ ἱεροὶ μυλῶνες). Given the pairing of being an *aletris* and making the *popana* in both the scholion and in Proclus we suspect that his knowledge of it comes from a source like this one.

Proclus' theurgic interpretation of this 'hieratic baking' looks like his own or Syrianus'. It exhibits Athens as already approaching the Kallipolis since, from Proclus' point of view, the symbolic significance of the rising bread is an imitation of the natures through which plants and animals rise to the gods. As such, it illustrates the women's competence in contriving *syntēmata* of the gods. Given the parallels between universe and *polis*, this theological knowledge is political knowledge. This passage provides a nice example of the way in which traditional exegetical material may become something totally different in the hands of late-antique Platonists.

<sup>78</sup> I.e. in tasks traditionally associated with men.

10 Just as up above [the divinities] differ in the way in which they generate,  
with the male contributing unification to the things that have been gen-  
erated, while in a different manner the female renders their common  
effects plural and divisible, so too the same account applies down here.  
15 There is a difference between the female and the male among their sim-  
ilar reproductive activities [down here]. And if the female performs this  
task more laboriously and the male, not merely without labour, but with  
pleasure, then this too is an image of things among the divine beings.  
Among them some [sc. the male divinities], through a superabundance  
of power, are active with much greater ease, since they are liberated  
and free of concern for the procession of secondary [existents]. Others  
20 [sc. the female divinities], however, act, on the one hand, with a lesser  
degree of transcendent superiority and, on the other, with a greater  
sympathy for the things that have been engendered.

<IV. THE FEMINIST PROPOSAL IS BENEFICIAL:

246.22–247.27>

<A. Arguments in support: 246.22–247.22>

But enough on these matters. With respect to the second [thesis] – that,  
in addition to being possible, the feminine service [to the city-state] is  
also best<sup>79</sup> – he developed it in a more condensed way<sup>80</sup> and there is an  
argument capable of [being presented] in this way: If it is more prof-  
25 itable for the political order for there to be more who are good than  
fewer who are good, then it is more profitable for not only the men to  
be educated, but the women as well. But everyone would surely agree  
with this, for to the extent that there are more people who are good, to  
247 that extent the life of the city-state is superior. (After all, it is just as in  
the case of the universe, where it is happy because the greater part of it  
lives in a manner that is divine, but the other parts ‘hover about mortal  
nature and this place’<sup>81</sup> which is very small, and for this reason [these

<sup>79</sup> τὸ γυναικεῖον δῖαμα. It is tempting to see this in a similar light to ‘feminist doctrine’ at 239.29 above. Here too we have the adjective rather than a genitive noun (e.g. the business concerning women). But we also have a Platonic parallel at the point at which Socrates agrees to Glaucon and Adeimantus’ request to open the difficult question of ‘women in common’. *Rep.* 451c1–3 μετὰ ἀνδρεῖον δῖαμα παντελῶς διαπερανθέν τὸ γυναικεῖον αὐτὸ περαίνειν. The sense of δῖαμα is vague, but in this context it perhaps carries some sense such as ‘service, office, duties’.

<sup>80</sup> Reading συντομώτερον for the ms’ συνδρομώτερον with Kroll’s suggestion.

<sup>81</sup> ὥσπερ γὰρ καὶ τὸ πᾶν εὐδαίμων, διότι τὸ μὲν πλεῖστον αὐτοῦ ζῇ θείως, τὰ δὲ κατὰ τὴν θνητὴν φύσιν καὶ τόνδε τὸν τόπον πάνσμικρον ὄντα περιπολεῖ καὶ διὰ τοῦτο κτλ. With the first clause, compare the description of the entire universe as a blessed living creature at

lower parts] are ruled by their superiors, since they are more numerous and more powerful.<sup>82</sup>) Therefore that which follows [from the premises] is what is truest: It is more profitable for women to be educated rather than only men, for half the city will be uneducated since the men alone will be led to virtue, while the women will be neglected.<sup>83</sup> Moreover, to the extent that the female genus is inclined toward being emotional (*to empathês*), since it is weaker, to that extent it is even more necessary for the lawgiver to pay heed to education for their kind by dragging it back toward what is best through correct guidance (*anagôgê*) and by warding off this weakness in their nature by the power of virtue. After all, the city-state will be more in harmony with itself if it is composed entirely of people who are good rather than composed of both those who are good and those who are not. The one who is the Father of the universe too – whom the lawgiver and the man who is the true politician pure and simple (*baplôs*) are modelled upon – established a universe [replete with] good things, since he in no way wished it to be bad (*phlauros*) so far as was possible.<sup>84</sup> It is for this reason that all things have been ordered in accordance with his intention, setting both gods and goddesses as well as male and female daemons to preside over the realms [of the universe].<sup>85</sup> Thus if, as he says (*Rep.* 592b), there is a celestial form for this political order (*politeia*), then the political order must imitate the two coordinate series (*systoichia*)<sup>86</sup> of superior beings

*Tim.* 34b. For the second clause, compare *Thet.* 176a6–8 οὐτ' ἐν θεοῖς αὐτὰ [sc. τὰ κακά] ἰδρῦσθαι, τὴν δὲ θνητὴν φύσιν καὶ τόνδε τὸν τόπον περιπολεῖ ἐξ ἀνάγκης.

<sup>82</sup> In terms of area, the heavens – populated by celestial gods and their invisible attendants – contain far greater numbers of better, happier inhabitants. The celestial and planetary gods rule over the sub-lunary realm or realm of mortals. Indeed, Proclus interprets the role of the Fates in the Myth of Er as implementing and co-ordinating the astrological influences of the heavens in the lives of individuals. (Lives that they have, of course, freely chosen from a range of options available to them.) Cf. II 264.9–15 and 342.21–4. For the multitudes that inhabit the heavens on Proclus' view, see Baltzly (2015).

<sup>83</sup> This argument resembles in some respects one of the five lines of argument that Proclus credits to Theodore of Asine. Compare 253.6–10 below.

<sup>84</sup> τὸ πᾶν ὑπέστησεν ἀγαθὰ μὲν πάντα, φλαῦρον δὲ μηδὲν εἶναι βουλόμενος κατὰ δύναμιν. Compare Plato, *Tim.* 30a2–3 βουλευθεὶς γὰρ ὁ θεὸς ἀγαθὰ μὲν πάντα, φλαῦρον δὲ μηδὲν εἶναι κατὰ δύναμιν. The near quotation explains the grammatical mismatch between the singular direct object of the verb τὸ πᾶν and the plural ἀγαθὰ πάντα that follows – a mismatch we gloss over by 'replete with'.

<sup>85</sup> τῶν ὅλων προεστᾶσιν. 'Wholes' would be more literal, but puzzling in English. Proclus frequently refers to a complete subsection of the universe (e.g. both the spheres of the planets as well as the planets themselves) as ὅλα. For female daemons, see in *Tim.* I 47.15–20 and 50.17–19, where the presence of higher order goddesses similarly requires that the division between the sexes should be mirrored at every level.

<sup>86</sup> The terminology recalls to the minds of the audience the Pythagorean columns of opposites; cf. Aristotle, *Metaphys.* 986a22–6: ἑτεροὶ δὲ τῶν αὐτῶν τούτων τὰς ἀρχὰς δέκα

25 by having had both men and women regulated by the finest standards of education. This, after all, is what is most truly beneficial to the parts – to imitate the whole – and for the human political orders to be modelled upon divine ones.

<B. Objection based on inconsistency with *Timaeus*  
42b5: 247.29–249.21>

248 Now someone might raise the following question: ‘if there are common pursuits for both males and females and if the standards of their education are the same, then why is it that when souls that leave the intelligible do wrong in their initial incarnation, do we believe that they turn into women in the next life, as if virtue were not common to women, but rather vice was appropriate to them?’ We should respond  
5 to the one raising this question that when Plato sets out the order of the procession for souls departing the intelligible realm to enter into the region down here, they are appointed with respect to lives – not in order that the similarity of women’s lives to men’s with respect to virtue should be removed, but because he realised the inferiority of the female  
10 sex in comparison to the male, even when it comes to the pursuits of virtue that are common to both of them. For he knew that not every case where we have relative deficiency (*hyphesis*) is one where there is a change in kind (*exallattein*).<sup>87</sup> Rather, this happens only where the same form that is in the superior thing could *never* be manifested in something different. But in the case at hand, the form of virtue in some women is such as that which occurs in males, with the result that [such]  
15 women live more virtuously than the men do and in accordance with the virtue that belongs to the men themselves. If the female never had virtue like that in the male, it would become clear that the form of virtue in them had undergone a change in kind (*exallattein*). Certainly the human virtue could never come to be superior to that of daemons due to  
20 the fact that there is a formal difference between the two of them; nor is it possible for some irrational creature to live [in accordance with] human virtue for the same reason. Therefore the formal <likeness><sup>88</sup> of virtue [in men and women] persuaded Socrates to make their education a common one. He inferred this from taking the facts at hand:  
25 that some women live [in accordance with] the virtue of men. This fact

λέγουσιν εἶναι τὰς κατὰ συστοιχίαν λεγομένας, πέρας [καί] ἀπειρον, περιττόν [καί] ἄρτιον, ἐν [καί] πλῆθος, δεξιόν [καί] ἀριστερόν, ἄρρεν [καί] θῆλυ, ἡρεμοῦν [καί] κινούμενον, εὐθὺ [καί] καμπύλον, φῶς [καί] σκότος, ἀγαθόν [καί] κακόν, τετραγῶνον [καί] ἑτερόμηκες.

<sup>87</sup> The meaning is clear from κατ’ εἶδος ἐξήλλακτο below at line 17.

<sup>88</sup> Reading ὁμοιότης in the lacuna at 248.22 with Kroll.

was also known to Timaeus and readily admitted by him, since he knew of the lives of Pythagorean women – Theano, Timychas, and Diotima herself.<sup>89</sup> But the relative deficiency (*byphesis*) of aptitude in women for all pursuits also persuaded Socrates and Timaeus to make the soul go into a woman in the second life (*Tim.* 42b5). This descent was not due to a power<sup>90</sup> but because of incapacity, for a greater incapacity makes for a greater weakness.<sup>91</sup>

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It is necessary for the lawmaker to look to the aptitude of each person in determining whether or not to grant to him some particular kind of training, as is evident from the [fact that] he leads up into the upper stratum of the city [members of the class of] labourers who have souls of gold due to their innate ability, while he sends down those who have souls of bronze.<sup>92</sup> The kind that includes the guardians and the labourers is not one that is divided like men and horses, where the natures retain no overlap [between them]. Rather, in the case of the guardians and workers, it is the<sup>93</sup> aptitude of each one that determines whether a soul gets assigned to one class or the other. Therefore, in the same way, women too may be worthy of the education and virtue of men since they are in some way removed from womanish (*thêluprepês*) incapacity, while some men degenerate into the incapacity of the former. It is necessary to look not merely at the kind [i.e. the sex], but at the capacity or inability of the individual who belongs to the two kinds and to determine their education with reference to this [capacity or inability]. If then the same souls alternatively come to have the lives of men and of women, and if the virtues are those of souls, not bodies, what could contrive to bring it about that the perfections are *different* due to their respective

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<sup>89</sup> Cf. Olympiodorus in *Alc.* 85.11–14 for the superiority of Theano's virtue to that of Thersites. One striking feature of this passage that we believe is otherwise unparalleled in our Neoplatonic sources is that Diotima seems to be characterised as a Pythagorean! (καὶ τοῦτο Τιμαίῳ γνώριμον καὶ εὐπαράδεκτον, εἰδότει τοὺς βίους τῶν Πυθαγορείων γυναικῶν, τῆς Θεανοῦς, τῆς Τιμύχας, τῆς Διοτίμας αὐτῆς.) On the Pythagorean women in general, see Pomeroy (2013).

<sup>90</sup> Presumably what is denied here is that the female *body* has a power to make the soul that inhabits it worse. This is just an application of the Neoplatonists' general principle that the soul is impassive relative to the body. Though it is not at all clear from what Proclus says here, it seems plausible that the putative weakness of the female body is a reflection of that body's soul having a certain lack of power or *adynamia*.

<sup>91</sup> ἡ οὖν γὰρ ἄλλον ἄδυναμία ποιεῖ τὸ ἄλλον ἀσθενές. ἡ οὖν γὰρ is problematic. While Kroll brackets οὖν, Festugière proposes to delete γὰρ. Since the following sentence seems to develop a new, but obviously related, line of thought, we suspect Festugière is right.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. *Rep.* 415b where Socrates makes it clear that, while the classes generally reproduce themselves, there are exceptions.

<sup>93</sup> Reading ἄλλ' <ή> ἐκαστων ἐπιτηδεϊότης in accordance with Kroll's suggestion in the critical apparatus.

20 *bodies*, rather than it being the case that the perfections are the *same* due to their *souls*? Surely the very same fact provides a sufficient proof that the virtues are common [between the sexes], namely that even prior to this the souls [that belong to both sexes] are common.

<C. Objection based on Galenic theory of dependence of psychic states on mixtures of the body: 249.21–250.12>

25 Moreover, we should not accept that kind of argument which says that the powers of the soul follow upon the qualities of the body's mixture and the virtues, in turn, follow upon these,<sup>94</sup> and because of this the virtue of a woman is one thing, while that of a man is another. In the first instance, if these views were to prevail, then we will have to make the health of a man or a woman different in form, in spite of their being a single thing – as is evident from the fact that there is a single profession (*technê*) that is concerned to bring about [the health] of this class, and that in contrast to the case of caring for horses as opposed to humans.<sup>95</sup>

250 Next, we shall have to say that the virtues found among men themselves also differ in form since they will differ depending upon the mixtures [of the different male bodies in question]. If they [sc. the virtues] differ from case to case [in men] due to different mixtures, the same argument will apply as in the previous cases.<sup>96</sup>

<sup>94</sup> Galen is the target here; cf. *Quod animi mores* 767.2 Ταῖς τοῦ σώματος κράσεσιν ἔπεσθαι τὰς δυνάμεις τῆς ψυχῆς, and for the virtues 768.3–4 εὐκрасίαν ἐργαζόμεθα καὶ ταύτης εἰς ἀρετὴν τῇ ψυχῇ συντελέσομεν – a view for which Galen claims Platonic and Pythagorean provenance, and not without some plausibility. Cf. Sorabji (2005), 183–204. *Quod animi mores* mentions sexual differentiation in the context of quoting selections from Aristotle's *PA* II.2. However, Galen's text does not draw the conclusions about distinct virtues for men and women that Proclus does here.

<sup>95</sup> Interestingly, Proclus does not invoke the authority of Plato for the sameness of health between men and women; cf. *Meno* 72d.

<sup>96</sup> ὁ αὐτὸς καὶ ἐπ' ἐκείνων λόγος ἔσται. That is to say, not only will the *virtues* differ between men who have different bodily mixtures, but so too will the science of *health*. Thus there will have to be a medicine for the tall, thin, and cold men and another *technê* for the short, fat, and warm men, just as there will be different virtues for them. Thus we suppose ἐπ' ἐκείνων refers back to the absurd consequences derived for the Galenic position in the previous objection. There the reasoning led to the conclusion that Galen's own profession will have to bifurcate between men's medicine and women's medicine. We take this second objection to push that diversification into the field of men's medicine since the *technê* of men's health will need to be as diverse as the bodily mixtures that determine it.

By contrast, Festugière translates: 'or si les vertus diffèrent d'un individu à l'autre à cause des mélanges, le même raisonnement vaudra aussi dans le cas des femmes' and comments 'Parfaitement clair grammaticalement, mais ἐκείνων est vague. J'ai entendu "les femmes" en raisonnant ainsi: "il n'y aura pas seulement différence formelle (κατ'

In addition to this, we will not grant the truth of their starting [premise]. The various lives that souls lead do *not* follow from the corporeal properties. But while among the uneducated this dominates the character only with respect to some enmattered desires, there are some powers even of the irrational soul itself that do not follow from bodily mixtures or from the person's time of life, as is the case with love of honour or love of money.<sup>97</sup> But if it is not the case with these [powers of the irrational soul], it is scarcely to be believed that the powers connected with choice should follow from these corporeal mixtures and/or that they are stronger than them.

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εἶδος) entre hommes et femmes, mais entre une femme et une autre.” Sous-entendre : c’est absurde, et suffit à ruiner la thèse. Mais est-ce le sens? We think the answer is ‘Probably not’. The opening line of the objection (ἐπειτα καὶ αὐτῶν τῶν ἀνδρῶν τὰς ἀρετὰς κατ’ εἶδος διαφέρειν ἐροῦμεν τῶν κράσεων διαφερούσων) recommends the view that we are now dealing with the implications of the Galenic theory for *men’s* virtues and *men’s* health.

<sup>97</sup> εἶναι δέ τινας καὶ αὐτῆς τῆς ἀλόγου ψυχῆς δυνάμεις οὐχ ἐπομένους κράσεσιν οὐδὲ ποιαῖς ἡλικίαις, ὥσπερ τὴν φιλότιμον καὶ φιλοχρήματον. It is puzzling to know how to take the final clause. We suspect that love of honour and love of money are given, not as examples of powers of the irrational soul that are independent of age or bodily mixtures, but rather as a contrast for powers that are independent. After all, the young were widely thought to be disposed to prize honour and reputation, while the old and aged were thought to seek security in money. Cf. Dover (1974), 105 and 109 where Aeschines I.88 draws the linkage between impending mortality and the dishonest pursuit of gain: certain jurors took bribes because ‘the unhappy creatures could not combat old age and poverty in combination’. On the other hand, in Plato’s portrait of the miserly man, the youth sees his honour-loving father have his wealth consumed by the pursuit of high office and compensates by seeking the security of money (*Rep.* 553b). So perhaps Proclus has this in mind as an illustration that love of money does *not* follow upon age. In general, Proclus’ writing in this final section against the Galenic theory is not very precise. It leaves the reader with the impression that his response to what he doubtless saw as a grubby materialist view of the soul is perfunctory and superficial.

251 *An examination of the arguments of  
Theodore of Asine that render virtue the same  
for men and women and concerning what  
5 Socrates said.*

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<I. EXEGESIS OF SOCRATES' ARGUMENTS:

251.6–252.31>

Socrates dealt with two arguments through which he supposes that the sameness of education and virtue for men and women is rendered unstable.<sup>98</sup> One argument leads the doctrine to something contrary to received opinion (*adoxos*)<sup>99</sup> (for, attempts to go from things that are  
10 contrary to received opinions have a capacity to refute (*anatruptikos*), while those that go from received opinions are persuasive (*pithanos*) relative to the propositions that are under examination). The other argument proceeds from what was agreed upon – [an assumption] through which he showed what justice is and arranged the entire political order.<sup>100</sup>

15 The argument that comes first is: if the virtues of women are precisely those of men, then it is also necessary for their education to be the same, since education is the precursor of the virtues. But if the education is the same, then they will undergo both physical and cultural training with us.<sup>101</sup> And if these things take place, then they will be na-

<sup>98</sup> σαλεύεσθαι. Cf. 243.16 above where the term is used in place of *homonymia* for the fallacy of equivocation.

<sup>99</sup> *Rep.* 452a, ff. where Socrates confronts the consequences of women and men having the same education and training. These include women training naked with men in the *palaestra*. Cf. 242.19 above.

<sup>100</sup> *Rep.* 453b, ff. where Socrates confronts the objection that the proposal is inconsistent with the earlier agreement at 369e that in the ideal *polis*, different natures should pursue different tasks. Cf. 242.29 above.

<sup>101</sup> καὶ γυμνάσσονται ἡμῶν αἱ γυναῖκες. The dative here is ambiguous. Our translation treats it as a dative of accompaniment. Festugière makes the dative possessive – ‘nos femmes’ (our women). A third alternative would be to see it as ‘ethical dative’ (Goodwin 1171), ‘for us’, which would come to something like ‘in the *politeia* that we and Plato are describing’.



ked, just as the men are in the gymnasia. But this is contrary to received opinion. Therefore they must not be naked. Thus they must not be educated with the same training [as men]. Therefore they will not have the same virtue as the men. 20

But he castigates<sup>102</sup> the [first] argument from a political point of view, for he does not think it right for the person who possesses intellect to look to what is thought to be contrary to received opinion (*adoxos*), but to look to what is good – even if it should be something that is not held in esteem by the many. After all, when people taste the benefits, they change their opinion and what previously appeared disreputable (*adoxos*) now appears reputable (*endoxos*) to them. 25 252

The argument from what was agreed upon [goes as follows]: If it is necessary that different natures have different pursuits (this, after all, was what chiefly ordered the city and supplied the path leading to the discovery of justice<sup>103</sup>), and men and women have different natures, they would also have to differ in their pursuits. But if this is so, and if the education of men was through cultural and physical training, then it would follow that it is not for women to share in these things. But if it is not requisite that women should undergo [the same] education [as men], then neither must one give them a share in the same virtues as those that belong to men. 5

If we must choose between these alternatives, we prefer the first one. Proclus' presentation imaginatively places his audience in the position of being naked in the gymnasium with the women. The summary of the argument in Essay 8 (242.20–5) omits any such device and in this respect more closely resembles Plato's presentation. Socrates does not invite Glaucon and Adeimantus to imagine themselves exercising with the women – though he does presuppose their repulsion at watching old men working out and invites them to consider how much worse it would be to exercise alongside old women. Cf. *Rep.* 452a10–b3 ἡ δὲ δὴ δὴ ὅτι γυμνὰς τὰς γυναῖκας ἐν ταῖς παλαίστραις γυμναζομένας μετὰ τῶν ἀνδρῶν, οὐ μόνον τὰς νέας, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἡδὴ τὰς πρεσβυτέρας, ὥσπερ τοὺς γέροντας ἐν τοῖς γυμνασίοις, ὅταν ῥυσοὶ καὶ μὴ ἡδεῖς τὴν ὄψιν ὁμῶς φιλογυμναστῶσιν; Proclus, however, often begins his essays by drawing his audience in and establishing a direct connection with them. Thus, in Essay 1 he proposes 'to demonstrate to you how one should handle introductions to Platonic dialogues'.

But perhaps we should not choose. Proclus could certainly have been clearer if he had wanted to. Perhaps we are meant to hear the dative in all these senses simultaneously.

<sup>102</sup> *epirrapizein* is a verb that Proclus often uses when he speaks of the criticisms that Porphyry and/or Iamblichus raise against mistaken views (*in Tim.* I 382.13; 398.28; 440.17; II 104.32). Theodore is not one who castigates arguments in Proclus' other references to him, but perhaps *epirrapizein* is a verb that Proclus tends to associate with his heroes giving some mistaken view a good thrashing. He also uses it in relation to Socrates' activity in criticising positions in the dialogues (*in Crat.* 153.4, 172.5).

<sup>103</sup> *Rep.* 433a.

10 Once again, he refuted this argument on the basis of an equivocation (*homonymia*), for [the words] ‘same’ and ‘different’<sup>104</sup> are said either without qualification or in a specific respect. Thus while there is nothing proper about allocating the same [task] to those who are different without qualification, when it comes to those who are the same in some respect, one ought to determine the task to be the same relative to the respect in which they are the same, and likewise different relative to the respect in which they differ. Thus a man and a woman will have different tasks relative to that in which they differ, since the one produces offspring in another, while the other produces in herself (for these are the respects in which they differ).<sup>105</sup> However, with regard to having a way of life that is both rational and irrational (where the one naturally rules and the other is naturally subordinate), they would have the same task, viz. having one rule and the other be subordinate. But these were the distinctive features of the virtues.<sup>106</sup> Thus, if these things are common to them, then surely the virtues too would be common to them.

15 These, then, are Socrates’ [arguments]. One ought to consider that he alone is consistent in these matters.<sup>107</sup> While the Stoics, on the one hand, think that the male and female differ in their form, but nonetheless have the same virtue, and the Peripatetics, on the other, think that they are the same in form, but that their virtues are not the same, he [Socrates] says that they are the same in form and also that the same virtue belongs to them.<sup>108</sup> This is due to the axiom that the perfections are coordinate (*systoichos*) with essences,<sup>109</sup> so that the same perfections belong to the same essences and different perfections to different essences, for it is Intellect that has given the essences and the perfections to the forms. Thus where it gives such and such an essence, there too are the perfections that are yoked to that essence.

<sup>104</sup> Literally, ‘the same and the different are said either without qualification or in a specific respect’ (τὸ γὰρ ταὐτὸν καὶ τὸ ἕτερον ἢ πῇ ἢ ἀπλῶς λέγεται). But the semantic diagnosis of the error in the argument (ἀπὸ τῆς ὁμωνυμίας) warrants an English translation that introduces what is lacking in ancient Greek: a convention for distinguishing use from mention.

<sup>105</sup> Cf. *Rep.* 454d10–e1 τῷ τὸ μὲν θῆλυ τίκτειν, τὸ δὲ ἄρρεν ὀχεύειν.

<sup>106</sup> That is to say, imposing and maintaining the right relations (i.e. those of ruling or being ruled) among the parts of the soul define the civic gradation of virtues.

<sup>107</sup> See above 237.3–13 where Proclus contrasts the consistent position of Plato, rather than his character Socrates, with the positions of the Stoics and Peripatetics in much the same terms.

<sup>108</sup> See notes above on 237.9–13 for the fairness of this characterisation of the Peripatetic and Stoic views on women.

<sup>109</sup> Cf. 236.21–2.

<II. FIVE ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS BY  
THEODORE OF ASINE: 253.1–255.24>

These matters having been set out properly, it is necessary to recall as well what the great Theodore has assisted in supplying. 253

<A. Theodore's trilemma: 253.1–14>

First he asks whether we shall attribute no virtue whatsoever to women or whether we shall attribute some virtue to them and, if the latter, whether it would be the virtue which we attribute to men or a different one, as those say who attribute courage to men but self-control (*sôphrosynê*) to women.<sup>110</sup> Now, if we attribute no virtue at all to women, 5

<sup>110</sup> It is clear that this on Theodore's part engages with Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* but it is probable that it also engages with the *Politics*. In Book I chapter 13 Aristotle considers whether slaves possess any virtues beyond those of instruments that are serviceable. He points out that puzzles arise either way. If they have virtues such as courage, self-control, and so on, then how will they differ from people who are free? – as they must on the assumption that some are slaves by nature (cf. *Pol.* 1254b20). On the other hand, it seems equally absurd if they possess reason yet entirely lack the virtues that belong to rational beings.

Aristotle notes that a similar dilemma arises for the virtues of women and children. Stated in full generality, the dilemma is this. Aristotle supposes that there is a relation of natural subordination between free men, on the one hand, and women, children and slaves on the other. This natural relation of subordination is not a matter of degree, but of kind, though also Aristotle supposes that rule over slaves is a different matter from rule over women. But if there is a similarly absolute distinction of kind between the virtues of ruler and ruled, then women and slaves will be precluded from having *sôphrosynê* or temperance on the assumption that men have this virtue. But then it will be mysterious how they can obey while lacking this virtue.

Aristotle's solution is to invoke an internal model for the external relations among persons. There is a ruling and subordinate part of the soul, each of which we say has virtue (1260a5–7 ἐν ταύτῃ γὰρ ἔστι φύσει τὸ μὲν ἄρχον τὸ δ' ἄρχόμενον, ὧν ἑτέραν φαμέν εἶναι ἀρετὴν, οἷον τοῦ λόγον ἔχοντος καὶ τοῦ ἀλόγου). Presumably Aristotle has in mind the intellectual and moral virtue that belongs respectively to the rational and irrational part of the soul. Crucially, however, what he writes is ambiguous between each of these parts having the *same* virtue and having its *own distinctive* virtue. Now, the non-free, non-male subjects that he considers are not exactly alike. Aristotle thinks that the natural slave lacks the deliberative faculty (*to bouleutikon*) altogether. Women possess it, but it lacks authority (1260a12–13). So since the nature of reason in each of those that are natural subjects of authority is different, the virtues of these differently rational beings will be different from those of the fully rational free man. He concludes that each will similarly participate in all the ethical virtues, but in a different manner that is commensurate with the function of each person (1260a14–17).

But this is not at all analogous to the internal case. The ethical virtues that belong to the irrational part of the soul are *not* the same as the intellectual virtues of the rational part. Moral virtues like courage or self-control are not different ways of sharing in

then we shall make the ideal city stunted (*kolobos*), since we will make it consist equally of people who are good (*spoudaios*) and those who lack goodness (*aspoudos*),<sup>111</sup> and the offspring that result from [the mating of] people will similarly be naturally suited (*euphyês*) for education and lacking in such natural suitability (*aphyês*). If, on the other hand, we  
 10 attribute some [virtues to women], then once again each kind [i.e. sex] will be stunted and only partly perfect (*bêmitelês*), since the virtue that it possesses is incomplete.<sup>112</sup> After all, if they were complete, the others would be reciprocally entailed, as even the Peripatetics themselves say that the complete virtues entail one another.<sup>113</sup> If, however, we give all the virtues to each kind, then we will have a solution.

intellectual virtues such as *epistêmê* or *nous*. Far from providing a clear internal model, Aristotle's example just muddies the water. What would follow from the internal analogy is that there are non-overlapping masculine and feminine virtues. This is a view that one could hold, of course, but it is not the view that Aristotle seems to settle on in the end. His settled view is that women participate in the four, traditional cardinal virtues – just not in the same *manner* in which men do.

<sup>111</sup> See above 247.5.

<sup>112</sup> Theodore's trilemma is potentially ambiguous. The most obvious reading is: either (i) women possess none of the four cardinal virtues; or (ii) they possess some of the four cardinal virtues that men do, but not others; or (iii) they possess all the same virtues. Option (i) is eliminated since it would leave the state half full of people with no virtue at all. Option (ii) is eliminated because it still leaves half the population at least partly stunted. We are thus left with (iii): men and women possess the same virtues.

But Aristotle's somewhat inept analogy with the relation between the rational and irrational parts of the soul noted above in fact suggests a fourth option: (iv) men and women possess distinct, non-overlapping kinds of virtue that have no more relation to one another than *epistêmê* and courage do. What Proclus writes (ἐἰ δὲ τινά, πάλιν ἐκάτερον ἔσται κολοβὸν τὸ γένος καὶ ἡμιτελές) is grammatically consistent with either (ii) or (iv): ἐἰ δὲ τινά on its own doesn't distinguish between attributing them [only?] *some of the four cardinal virtues* and attributing them *some virtues* (though not any of the four cardinal ones that men possess). In either case, it is not implausible that each sex will be stunted, since there will be virtues that pertain to rational creatures that even the best members of the two sexes will lack.

But the matter is resolved by Theodore's allusion to the brief and difficult discussion of the unity of the complete – as opposed to the natural – virtues in Aristotle's *EN* VI.13. Suppose that we consider the sex-segregated division of the cardinal virtues implied by option (ii) and assign self-control or *sôphrosynê* to women. Theodore seems to take the Peripatetic position to be that if a woman possesses self-control in a complete or perfect manner, then she must also possess *phronêsis* or practical wisdom (*EN* 1144b31–5). But, according to Aristotle, practical wisdom in the full sense is reciprocal with all the moral virtues. As a result, the woman who possesses the full measure of self-control will also possess virtues like courage or justice that belong to men.

<sup>113</sup> The view that Aristotle actually seems to defend, in spite of the inept analogy from the *Politics*, is (v) men and women have the same cardinal virtues, but possess these virtues in *different ways* corresponding to the different ways in which they share in rationality (with, e.g., women having the deliberative capacity in a way that is

<B. Argument from the facts themselves: 253.14–26>

Second, Theodore attempts to argue from the facts themselves. It is clear that men and women exhibit the same [features], for the human sexes [only] differ as a result of different political arrangements.<sup>114</sup> The Amazons and the Sarmatians are courageous just like Thracians. And among the Lusitanians,<sup>115</sup> as they say, women command armies, practise politics, and do everything that the men do among the Greeks. The men, however, used the loom and worked with wool and did all those things which the women do among the Greeks. If these things are agreed upon, then let us believe that the possession of virtue differs not at all from the male to the female. Nor should we determine these matters<sup>116</sup> by paying attention to customs and habits, but by paying attention to the natures which are shown to be the same [between the sexes] by the fact that they possess an aptitude for the same tasks, even if this happens in different ways in different places.

<C. Theological considerations: 253.26–254.10>

Third, he [Theodore] thinks it worthwhile to look at these matters from a theological standpoint (*theologikos tropos*) too. The tradition (*phêêmê*) of those who are wise in divine matters states that the same goddess is the weaver (*histourgos*) and especially celebrates her as ‘worker’ (*ergatês*)<sup>117</sup> in the greatest<sup>118</sup> sacred rites and hands down [the tradition] that she bears arms and leads in war. Following this [line of reasoning] up to the case of the entire divine race, Theodore asks whether in this instance too the same virtue is not to be granted to males and females among the

non-authoritative). Absent any clarity about the relation between possessing, say, natural courage, possessing complete courage, and possessing it in the way in which women possess it, it is not easy to say whether Theodore’s *ad hominem* argument from *EN* VI.13 is decisive.

<sup>114</sup> Since we have no verb in γάρ τὰ διάφορα γένη τῶν ἀνθρώπων κατὰ τὰς διαφόρους πολιτείας, we follow Festugière in supposing that something like γίγνεσθαι is to be understood. Hence ‘as a result of’ for κατὰ. Nothing in the Greek text answers to his ‘résulte *seulement*’, but we agree that the logic of the argument requires it.

<sup>115</sup> See notes on 242.1 above for the Sarmatians and Lusitanians.

<sup>116</sup> Festugière supposes that Proclus’ vague terminology – ‘these matters’ – refers to the common education of men and women.

<sup>117</sup> Pausanias reports that the Athenians were the first to name Athena ‘the worker’ (1.24.3). See also Sophocles fr. 844 with Jebb’s notes on the sense of this epithet and the associated ritual.

<sup>118</sup> The manuscript has ἐν μέσοις τοῖς ἱεροῖς which Festugière renders as ‘en plein milieu des cérémonies saintes’. We give in to Kroll’s invitation to amend to μεγίστοις given Proclus’ special relationship with Athena. Cf. *Vit. Proc.* §30.

5 gods. Now surely one must agree to this, for if it is absurd to say that a god lacks any portion of some virtue, and is without a share in any of them whatsoever, then it is necessary that all of the gods and all of the goddesses have every virtue in its entirety. After all, however minor the deprivation, that god [who lacks some virtue] will not be blessed (*eudaimôn*). But every god *is* blessed. Therefore if it is the case that up there the male and the female each share in the entirety of virtue, then  
10 surely it is obvious that, by analogy, in our case these kinds [i.e. sexes] will have the same virtue as the kinds up there.

<D. Physical considerations: 254.11–29>

In the fourth place, Theodore thinks it is worthwhile to consider an attempt to prove the point from a physical perspective (*physikôs*). He takes up the question of whether the organs from which the male and female have been constructed contribute toward the same function in each case. For instance, if the eyes contribute toward seeing, and the ears toward hearing, and whether the brain is dedicated to perception  
15 or the legs toward motion from place to place, and similarly for each of the other organs that are common between the sexes. If all the common parts of their *bodies* have come to be for the sake of the same things, what is there to prevent it from being the case that, since the parts of the *soul* are common, they too have been established within them for the sake of the same functions? But if these have been established for the sake of the same things, then there will also be the same per-  
20 fections for them, since these are surely what make the functions perfect. After all, this is so in the case of the bodily organs. Since seeing is common [to both men and women], acuity of vision is the common perfection, and since hearing is common to both, acuity of hearing is the common perfection. Thus, since reason is common [to both sexes], so the life lived in accordance with reason is also common. As a result,  
25 wisdom too is common [to both]. Moreover, since the appetitive part (*to epithymêtikon*) is common, so having appetites in an orderly way is common. As a result, self-control is also common. And since being provoked is common [between the sexes], so too is being resolute, for surely it is not the case that, although he<sup>119</sup> has granted the spirited part to

<sup>119</sup> As Festugière notes, the subject of the verb is not specified. Like Festugière, we take it to be the Demiurge of the *Timaeus*, at least indirectly. For the alternative that the subject is Theodore, see Deuse (1973), and for discussion see Longo (2002), 64. We are discussing one of the irrational, and thus mortal, parts of the soul and at *Tim.* 41d the Demiurge directs the Younger Gods to ‘weave together the mortal and immortal in order to produce living beings’. While they carry out the work, it seems to be the

women, it nonetheless always lives irrationally in females, for it would be pointless had he made it [sc. the *thymos*] living subordinate to reason [if it never did so in women.]<sup>120</sup>.

<E. Argument from the Egyptian prophet: 254.29–255.13>

Theodore then provides an additional fifth argument – this argument being one which he says he heard from a certain Egyptian prophet. Among the souls that proceed into human beings, some of them come even into the female race filled with divinity (*entheos*).<sup>121</sup> Now surely Helen is one such soul, since she is no less divine than her brothers the Dioscuri<sup>122</sup> and she was filled, both body and soul, with all the charms of Aphrodite. In order to make a long story short, the prophet said that Helen was born a kind of Aphrodite, and when she came from heaven, she fooled the barbarian (i.e. Paris) into thinking he had what he in fact did not have. She, on the other hand, having gone to Egypt, took part in the originary<sup>123</sup> religious rites.<sup>124</sup> While these facts have been preserved

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Demiurge who grants women (and men) the desiderative and thymetic parts of the soul by directing the Younger Gods to provide these things.

<sup>120</sup> μάτην γὰρ ἂν αὐτὸν ὑπὸ τῷ λόγῳ ζῶντα ἐποίησεν. The αὐτὸν must go back to θυμόν in the previous line, so Theodore or Proclus must have supposed that the Demiurge's creation of spirit in women as a part of the soul that is *capable* of being controlled by reason would be pointless if it never were, in fact, controlled by women's reason. But such subordination of the *thymos* to reason is courage, so the virtues are common to both if the parts of the soul are common to both.

<sup>121</sup> τῶν εἰς ἀνθρώπων ἰουσῶν ψυχῶν ἔρχονται τινες καὶ εἰς τὸ θῆλυ φύλον ἐνθεοί. Festugière observes: 'Ainsi rejeté tout à la fin, ἐνθεοί (255.2) a certainement un sens restrictif.'

<sup>122</sup> Helen and Pollux are the product of Leda's union with Zeus, while Castor and Clytaemnestra are the children of Leda by Tyndareus who slept with her on the same night as Zeus. Cf. Apollodorus 3.10.7 and Euripides, *Helen* 16.

<sup>123</sup> τῶν πρώτων ἱερῶν. It seems plausible to hear this not merely in terms of the old trope of Egyptians as inventors of religion (which appears as early as Herodotus) but, in light of this originary status, to understand πρώτων as 'first-rate', i.e. most advanced and best.

<sup>124</sup> There are several stories about Helen's presence in Egypt during the Trojan war. On one version (Herodotus 2.112–20), after Paris kidnapped Helen, his ships were blown off course and he landed in Egypt. When King Proteus became aware of Paris' impious violation of the norms of guest friendship, he kept Helen there in safety and Paris sailed back to Troy. This version perhaps best suits Theodore's notion that she was initiated into sacred rites, for in Herodotus Paris is undone by crew members who seek refuge in the temple of Heracles and are branded with his mark, thus becoming exempt from their master's power. Like Theodore's account, Herodotus too purports to be relating what he heard from Egyptian priests. In Herodotus' version, there is no image of Helen at Troy and the Greeks are simply mistaken in supposing that she is there. The other version of Helen's stay in Egypt better suits this aspect of Theodore's account. In Euripides' *Helen*, the protagonist reports that Hera – angry with Paris



10 by them [sc. the Egyptians], various theatrically inclined men among the Greeks created other slanders about her, since they knew nothing of the truth.<sup>125</sup> These are the things that the Egyptian and subsequently Theodore explained.

<1. *Concluding reflections: 255.13–24*>

15 If this is true and souls that are divine in form (*theoeidês*) go into females, then what is there to prevent<sup>126</sup> the virtues from being common to them too? Besides, women become seers in the same way men do when they are possessed (*katochos*) by the prophetic gods, as we grant happens in the case of female prophets and other experts in ritual (*telestikos*). What about the Platonic Diotima, or Theoxena the barbarian, or Berenice,<sup>127</sup> this other woman who taught magic? Shall we eliminate their self-control, courage or wisdom? How would they achieve divine visions or divine inspirations? After all, would a god ever attend upon humans who were without virtue?<sup>128</sup> All of us, in any event, would say that in every case similar things love to keep company with one another, and so that which participates in every virtue keeps company with that which lives in accordance with virtue.

because he preferred Aphrodite to her in the beauty contest – made an image that Paris took to Troy, while Hermes carried the real Helen off to Egypt. Proclus also offers an allegorical interpretation of the choice of Paris in Essay Six (*in Remp.* I 108.3–109.7).

<sup>125</sup> Somewhat similarly, Plutarch finds the Attic tragedians to blame for their libel against Minos (*Thes.* 16.3). Proclus, who believes the *Minos* to be a genuine work of Plato (discussed briefly at 1.62.7 and 1.156.9–157.6) follows a similarly pro-Minos tradition and would no doubt similarly lay the blame for Minos' terrible reputation, like that of Helen, upon the tragedians.

<sup>126</sup> 254.17 above.

<sup>127</sup> Theoxena remains a mystery, though her name (host or guest of the gods) is certainly appropriate for a magician. Berenice, however, may be more clear: Festugière added in an *addendum* to volume 3 of his translation that Segonds had suggested to him, following arguments of Waszink, that this might well be Berenice II, daughter of Magas of Cyrene, who ruled Egypt as queen and co-regent with Ptolemy III. Cf. Waszink (1944). She competed in the Nemean games and was celebrated by Callimachus (fr. 54 Harder). Her name also appears in a list of magicians in Tertullian, *De Anima* 57. As Waszink noted (1944, 73), it was not unusual for Egyptian kings and queens to come to be associated with magic, noting the famous example of Nectanebo as he appears in the *Alexander Romance* and elsewhere. Her father's name, as Waszink and subsequently Segonds note, would also have contributed to such a development, as would her reputation as a maker of unguents (Athenaeus 15, 689a). We would also note the celestial and fantastical content of Callimachus' most famous poetry in honour of Berenice (the *Lock of Berenice* translated into Latin by Catullus (66)), in which the lock of hair which she dedicated for the safe return of her husband, Ptolemy III, in the temple of Arsinoe Aphrodite at Cape Zephyrium, was transported to become a constellation.

<sup>128</sup> Cf. *Rep.* 612c.



<III. TWO OBJECTIONS AND REPLIES:

255.25–257.6>

Such are the things that it is necessary to contribute to the arguments of Socrates from what the great Theodore has written in defence of similar education for women as for men – an education through which there is a pathway to complete virtue for men and women. But there are two other Platonic puzzles<sup>129</sup> in these matters. Here is one puzzle: how is it that, if the female is receptive of the same virtue [as the male], no soul that descends from the intelligible goes into the female sex?<sup>2130</sup> Another puzzle is this: why is it that in the *Laws* Plato does not entrust to women as well the office (*archê*) of guardian of the laws, while here [in the *Republic*, he has the office of] female guardian?

<A. Consistency with the *Timaeus*: 256.3–15>

To the first puzzle it must be said that, since he wanted to signify the inferiority of the one sex (*genos*) in relation to the other sex, he directs the newly initiated soul<sup>131</sup> to birth in the male, but then later in the female. For it does not follow from the fact that they are able to participate in the same kind of virtue that they actually do participate in the same manner (*hôsautôs*). Rather, men participate more strongly (*errômenesteros*) in virtue, just as they take part [more competently] in those pursuits that seem to belong more to women than to men, as Plato himself says.<sup>132</sup> Therefore the masculine souls are more capable by nature than

<sup>129</sup> ἀπόρων Πλατωνικῶν cf. in *Tim.* I 56.27.

<sup>130</sup> Here we return to the puzzle that Proclus himself addresses at greater length in Essay 8, 247.27, ff.

<sup>131</sup> A term that Proclus picks up from *Phaedrus* 250e1; cf. in *R.* II 185.23: Τὰς μὲν νεοτελεῖς ψυχὰς καὶ πρώτην ἐκ τοῦ νοητοῦ ποιουμένας κάθοδον ὁ ἐν τῷ Φαίδρῳ Σωκράτης φησὶν.

<sup>132</sup> Cf. *Rep.* 455c4–d5. Proclus here refers to Socrates' controversial premise that, though few men excel at the feminine pursuits of weaving or cooking, those that do weave or cook do so *better* than any woman. For Socrates, this fact about men's greater competence across the board clears a way through the objection that different natures should have different tasks. If there is no one task at which women are better than any man, then there is no distinctively female task. Thus there is no task that belongs to them by nature and we will not contravene the one nature – one task principle by making some of them Guardians.

Proclus seemingly thinks that this shows that while females participate in the same virtues as men, men participate in them more strongly (*errômenesteron*). Thus Proclus perhaps reads *Rep.* 456a–11 (Καὶ γυναικὸς ἄρα καὶ ἀνδρὸς ἡ αὐτὴ φύσις εἰς φυλακὴν πόλεως, πλὴν ὅσα ἀσθενεστέρα, ἡ δὲ ἰσχυροτέρα ἐστίν) in such a way that the 'weakness' and 'strength' here are not merely physical in nature.

the feminine ones.<sup>133</sup> This explains why, among souls, the former are more proximate to the higher life. And descents tend to take place into more distant [ranks] through those that are proximate, so that it is likely that they will go into that which has been rendered masculine before they go into what is feminised.

<B. Consistency with the *Laws*: 256.15–257.6>

In response to the second [puzzle it should be said] that in the *Laws* he takes people who have already lived in other political arrangements and, even if they have remained unperturbed [by their previous experience], they also do not have the most elevated natures, whereas here [in the *Republic*] the people are received as if they were sprung straight from the universe<sup>134</sup> and educated [accordingly]. This is why in the former work, while he does entrust some offices to women, he does not do so with the highest of offices,<sup>135</sup> but entrusts those only to men insofar as they possess that very thing that we just mentioned: being naturally stronger and more high-minded.<sup>136</sup> After all, the other disposition of

<sup>133</sup> <αἱ ἀρρενωποὶ ψυχαὶ τῶν θηλυπρεπῶν δυνατώτεραι>. Whatever Theodore's view of the matter, here we have Proclus' notion that souls are innately gendered. Some are masculine; others feminine. The feminine ones are less capable. For gendered souls in Proclus, see Baltzly (2013) and Schultz (2018).

<sup>134</sup> Presumably Proclus has in mind *Rep.* 541a where the ideal city is founded by the philosophers taking the citizens as children. There Socrates says that they will send all who are over the age of ten out of the city, into the countryside, and take over (*paralambanein*) the children who have now been separated from the social mores of their parents. Perhaps Proclus transposes this idea into a cosmic context. The inhabitants of the ideal city of the *Republic* are received (*hypodechesthai*) from the universe. Like the cosmic *hypodochê* that bears the imprint of the Forms, the inhabitants of the ideal city are clean slates. For the Neoplatonists' views about the relation between the *Republic* and the *Laws*, see O'Meara (2003), 92.

<sup>135</sup> The scope for political participation by women in Plato's *Laws* is a matter of scholarly dispute. Four roles for women are explicitly recognised: 1) priesthoods for women over sixty (VI 759a–760a); 2) marriage supervisors (VI 784a, ff.); 3) these supervisors appoint overseers of nurses for each of the twelve tribes (VII 794a, ff.); 4) masters of the women's common dining rooms (VII 806e). The dispute arises because of an ambiguity at *Laws* VI.785b2–9 where the Stranger establishes different age limits for men and women 'for office' (εἰς δὲ ἀρχάς). Does this mean 'for all offices' or does it mean 'for the offices explicitly designated for women'? For a narrow reading which accords with Proclus' understanding, see Folch (2015), 253–8. For the wider reading that conflicts with Proclus, see Bobonich (2002), 386.

<sup>136</sup> While Proclus has previously mentioned the idea that men are naturally stronger, this is the first time this has been equated with being 'high-minded'. Presumably ὑψηλοφρονέστερον is meant to have some positive connotation for Proclus. It must be said that the sole occurrence in the *Republic* is not similarly positive: at 550b it is used to describe the evolution of the timocratic person from his good father and is

political order established by Socrates [in the *Republic*] is not like that 25  
in the *Laws*. In the latter case there does not seem to be the sharing of  
property among all that Socrates prescribed in the former, nor is the  
same form of life lived by those in the one as in the other. Consequent-  
ly he was likely satisfied with entrusting the highest authority to men  
alone when he established the one [political order] since it is inferior to 30  
the other by as much as the partial form of political order abandons the  
community of all. After all, the female has by nature a greater sympathy 257  
for what is private than does the male.<sup>137</sup> Thus, having introduced a  
division of property and of children, it was not safe to guide women to  
authority over the whole, since they are compelled by nature itself to be 5  
sympathetic to what is private as opposed to what is public and to the  
particular rather than the universal.

probably best understood as ‘haughty’. Plato uses ὑψηλόνους, cf. *Phdr.* 270a1 in the  
sense appropriate here and Proclus gives that term a positive meaning too; cf. *Plat.*  
*Theol.* I 8.21–2: πρὸς τὴν ὑψηλόνουν καὶ ἔνθεον τοῦ Πλάτωνος φιλοσοφίαν. Greek words  
like this denoting pride or high-mindedness, it may be added, frequently show the  
same ambiguity between justified and appropriate pride and mere arrogance. For a  
similarly positive use of ὑψηλόφρων in relation to a woman, see Damascius *Phil Hist.*  
86G (Athanassiadi) describing Damiane, the wife of Asclepiodotus.

<sup>137</sup> See above 246.8–22 for the idea that even female goddesses are more concerned with  
the specific and individual products of their generative activity than male gods are.  
Proclus’ characterisation of female divinities rehearses some of the themes associated  
with an ‘ethic of care’ including concern for specific individuals rather than universal  
principles. See Baltzly (forthcoming).

## Introduction to Essay 10

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### I. THE LANDSCAPE OF MODERN INTERPRETATIONS OF *REP.* 476E–77A

Essay 10 of Proclus' commentary focuses on one of the passages in Plato's *Republic* that has generated the most scholarly controversy – the argument through which Socrates distinguishes genuine philosophers from pretenders to that title.<sup>1</sup> This argument is a key part of Socrates' response to the third and greatest of the three questions put to him by his friends: the question of how the ideal city-state might come about. Socrates' famous answer is that philosophers must become rulers or rulers must take up philosophy (473d–e), and this answer, in turn, requires that we distinguish genuine philosophers from those who are simply in love with learning. Proclus characterises this distinction as one between *philosophia* and *philomathia* and for him, as for Plato, it is a matter of ontological commitment rather than temperament or motivation. Those who genuinely love wisdom are those who recognise the necessity of forms and are capable of coming to understand them (476a–b). Now, Socrates is well aware that the lovers of learning who do not recognise the necessity of forms may protest their exclusion from the class of wisdom-lovers on such ontological grounds. The controversial argument at 476e1–80a13 is presented as a means of persuading these 'lovers of sights and sounds' while hiding from them the fact that they aren't in their right minds (476c). The argument proceeds as follows.

1. Knowledge is set over what entirely is (*to pantalôs on*), 477a2
2. Ignorance is set over what in no way is, 477a3
3. Belief, being situated between knowledge and ignorance, must be of what is and is not, 476d11
4. The many beautifuls (*ta polla kala*) upon which the sight-lovers direct their attention both are and are not, 479b6–e5
5. [So?] The sight-lovers' conventional opinions (*nomima*) both are and are not, 479d4

So, the sight-lovers have only belief or opinion and not knowledge.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Fine (1978) – a seminal paper for establishing the modern landscape of interpretations of this argument in *Republic* V.

Premise 3 is itself the conclusion of the following subsidiary argument:

1. Different faculties or powers are distinguished by the fact that
  - a) they accomplish different things and b) are set over different objects, 477d1
2. Since knowledge is infallible while belief is not, they accomplish different things
3. Ignorance and belief also accomplish different things

So, (3) belief is not set over either what entirely is or over what in no way is. It remains that it may be set over what is in between, i.e. what is and is not.

There are two kinds of ambiguity that people have focused on in the interpretation of this argument: *what* entirely is, or is and is not, or in no way is, and *in what sense* it entirely is, is and is not, or in no way is. The first question asks whether Plato thought that knowledge, belief and ignorance were a matter of standing in a particular relation to an object or to some content, like a proposition. Thus, we can distinguish two different ways of reading premise 1:

- (O1) Knowledge is set over some *object* which entirely is
- (C1) Knowledge is set over some *content* or proposition which entirely is

And we can make appropriate substitutions throughout all the premises in the argument to come up with Contents or Objects readings of each subsequent premise.

The other ambiguity centres on 'is': does it mean *exists* entirely (existential interpretation), or is *entirely F* (predicative interpretation), or is entirely *true* (veridical interpretation)? The first two options go with the objects interpretation, the third with the contents interpretation. So, there are now at least three versions of the argument:

- (EO1) Knowledge is set over some object which entirely *exists*
- (PO1) Knowledge is set over some object which is *entirely F*, e.g. beautiful
- (VC1) Knowledge is concerned with some [set of] contents or propositions all of which are *true* or *entirely* (i.e. exceptionlessly) *true*

Each of these readings must also make sense of the contrast with what belief and ignorance are set over in premises 2 and 3. In particular, each reading must say something about the 'many beautifuls' in premise 4. This may involve further distinctions drawn with the Objects readings

to specify just what sort of ‘thing’ knowledge, belief, etc. are relations to. Alternatively, it may involve a further specification of the kind of content in question. Another wild card in the argument is what is meant in premise 4 by ‘the many beautifuls’. Some options include:

- (Object 4) Actual beautiful *things*, so that what is meant is that sensible things are only beautiful in some respect or in comparison with some things and not others. Cf. *Symposium* 211a.
- (Property 4) Sensible *properties* like being brightly coloured which the sight lovers might identify as the ‘that on account of which’ or ‘by which’<sup>2</sup> all the many beautiful things are beautiful. The point would then be that, because being brightly coloured fails to make some things beautiful, it cannot be the ‘that on account of which’ or ‘by which’ of beauty.
- (Content 4) A plurality of different, incomplete *accounts* of why things are beautiful, e.g. sometimes the bright colour makes them beautiful, but other things are made beautiful in other ways. The point might then be that these different accounts are both true and not true or, more accurately, true only within a limited range of cases.

Finally, there is the question of the first premise of the subsidiary argument:

- 1. Different faculties or powers are distinguished by the fact that a) they accomplish different things and b) are set over different objects. (477d1)

What justifies the fact that this principle for distinguishing faculties is *conjunctive* – different faculties must have *both* different things that they accomplish and also different objects? Isn’t the premise just open to obvious counter-examples? After all, the veterinarian and the butcher each have powers that seem to be set over the same objects (animals) but accomplish very different work. This question has a bearing on the interpretation of Plato’s text since, other things being equal, we would prefer not to attribute to his protagonist a premise in a key argument that seems obviously false.

## 2. SITUATING PROCLUS’ INTERPRETATION

Where, then, does Proclus’ reading sit in relation to the contemporary literature? It might seem that the answer to this question is pretty obvious: Proclus supposes that the objects of knowledge are things (*onta*)

<sup>2</sup> Cf. the instrumental dative at *Hippias Major* 289d2–3 *ἐτι δὲ καὶ δοκεῖ σοι αὐτὸ τὸ καλόν, ᾧ καὶ τᾶλλα πάντα κοσμεῖται καὶ καλὰ φαίνεται*.

and specifically forms, so he embraces an Objects reading. Moreover, he thinks that the objects of knowledge are distinguished from the objects of opinion because the latter are subject to *becoming* (361.1–5) and thus *exist* to a lesser extent than those things (such as forms) whose existence and activity is not measured by time (ET 51).<sup>3</sup> This is the ‘degrees of existence’ reading of Plato’s metaphysical epistemology that is associated with Neoplatonism generally and with older interpretations of Plato, such as that of Cross and Woosley.<sup>4</sup> It is deeply unfashionable today. A standard reference work on Plato unqualifiedly condemns the degrees of existence reading:

Plato’s thought is not well represented by interpretation (3), ‘what is known must exist’. He goes on immediately (477a2–7) to describe things as being more or less, and some things as ‘such as to be and not to be’ and hence intermediate between ‘being unqualifiedly’ and ‘not being in any way’. The notion of degrees of existence is not only unintelligible in itself; nothing suggests that Plato accepted it.<sup>5</sup>

Everson goes on to hold up the degrees of being view or the degrees of truth view as superior alternatives. The degrees of being approach supposes, not that *existing* comes in degrees, but that *being some character* or other – being F – comes in degrees. The form of F-ness is F in such a way that it is immune from being simultaneously not-F. This, however, is not true of ‘the many beautifuls’ in the *Republic* V argument.<sup>6</sup> Proclus

<sup>3</sup> All things that are self-constituted (and thus outside time) ἐξήρηται τῶν ὑπὸ χρόνου μετρούμενων κατὰ τὴν οὐσίαν. We take it that when x transcends y with respect to substance or being, x *exists* to a greater extent than y does. Cf. in *Tim.* I 252.28. Similarly, at ET 24.8 he speaks of a lower kind of existence (*hypoarxis*) had by ‘participated forms’ in relation to ‘unparticipated forms’. In *Plat. Theol.* IV 60.6, he speaks of a decline (*hypobesis*) through which material things come to have a divisible kind of existence (*hypostasis*) that is inferior to the indivisible kind of existence had by intelligibles. Finally at in *Tim.* I 233.1–4 Proclus endorses an ‘ancient’ notion that the intelligible realm is *ontôs on*, the psychic realm *ouk ontôs on*, the visible realm *ouk ontôs ouk on*, while matter is *ontôs ouk on*. Runia and Share translate – quite properly in our view – ‘truly existent’, ‘not truly existent’, ‘not truly non-existent’, and ‘truly non-existent’. Thus whatever terminology for existence we choose to focus on, there is evidence that Proclus supposes that existence comes in degrees.

<sup>4</sup> Cross and Woosley (1964). <sup>5</sup> Everson (2008), 177.

<sup>6</sup> Different proponents of the degrees of being approach may locate the differences between the manner in which the F Itself is F and the manner in which the participants are F differently. Perhaps it is simply a matter of relative terms, such as beautiful or large, which always implicitly involve a completing term or specification of the respect or relation in which the predicate applies; cf. Baltzly (1997). Perhaps the F Itself is F in such a way that the definition is also predicable of it, while the sensibles are F in such a way that the definition of F is not predicable of them; cf. Silverman (2002). Or perhaps the F Itself is F in the manner in which a paradigm or original is F, while the participants bear the predicate in the way in which copies are F; cf. Allen (1960).

too shares the view that different subjects have a predicate attributed to them in different ways. That which is the cause of F is F in the primary manner or *prôtôs*, while the effects are F in a way that involves a decline or *hyphesis* in the manner in which they are F.<sup>7</sup>

But Proclus holds a degrees of *existence* view because he holds, more generally, a degrees of *being* view and, moreover, does not distinguish existence from other kinds of predicates as philosophers historically downstream from Kant's criticism of the transcendental argument and from Frege's logic tend to. For moderns, existence is not a predicate. So even if being F comes in degrees, this does not imply the dreaded notion of degrees of existence. Proclus sees no such radical distinction between being good, for instance, and simply being.

Finally, Proclus would also endorse the reading of Plato's argument in terms of contents and the 'is' of veridicality. Now, it will be objected that no coherent reading of Plato's argument can endorse both the objects and contents reading – at least on the assumption that the contents reading demands a reading of the 'is' in terms of being veridical. After all, only contents can be true or false. Objects are not bearers of truth values because nothing is an object (in the relevant sense) and also a representation. As we all know, truth belongs only to representations. Even though we may speak of a 'true friend', we mean only that this person is someone you can really count on – not that he is a friend in anything like the manner in which propositions are true.

This is a modern orthodoxy that Proclus did not share. The reason for this is that he takes Plato's *Philebus* seriously when Socrates says that any existing thing must have some *truth* mixed in with it.<sup>8</sup> This is a point we take up at greater length in the Introduction to Essay 11. But to put the matter briefly, Truth, along with Symmetry and Beauty, are the 'three monads' of the *Philebus* and Proclus composed an essay specifically on this subject which is now lost to us.<sup>9</sup> His views on the metaphysical role of truth as an ingredient in all existing things can be gleaned from his remarks on the *Platonic Theology*. In that work, he

<sup>7</sup> Cf. *ET* 97 Πάν τὸ καθ' ἐκάστην σειρὰν ἀρχικόν αἴτιον τῇ σειρᾷ πάσῃ τῆς ἑαυτοῦ μεταδίδωσιν ἰδιότητος· καὶ ὃ ἐστὶν ἐκεῖνο πρῶτως, τοῦτό ἐστιν αὐτὴ καθ' ὕψους. Proclus' version of the degrees of being approach is more complex because of the very many modes that he identifies through which a thing can be F. These modes of being mirror hierarchies in degrees of existence. Things that are F noetically are superior in being to those that are F psychically. Or things that are F in the manner of a whole are superior to those that are F in the manner of a part. Cf. Baltzly (2008).

<sup>8</sup> *Phlb* 64a7–b3 {ΣΩ.} Ἀλλὰ μὴν καὶ τόδε γε ἀναγκαῖον, καὶ οὐκ ἄλλως ἂν ποτε γένοιτο οὐδ' ἂν ᾖν. {ΠΡΩ.} Τὸ ποῖον; {ΣΩ.} Ὡς μὴ μείζομεν ἀλήθειαν, οὐκ ἂν ποτε τοῦτο ἀληθῶς γίγνοιτο οὐδ' ἂν γενόμενον εἴη.

<sup>9</sup> The work is mentioned in Essay 12: I 294.24–5.



assigns Truth responsibility for making things exist, while Symmetry makes them unified and Beauty makes them intelligible.<sup>10</sup> So from his point of view it is quite plausible that the things that really are (*ta ontôs onta*), have both a greater degree of *existence* and a greater degree of *truth* than those things that combine being with not-being – the objects of opinion that both are and are not. Since the thing that really is beautiful, i.e. Beauty itself, is the cause of the many beautifuls it *is beautiful* to a higher degree than they are. Thus from Proclus' point of view, the contemporary competing readings of the *Republic* argument are *all* correct understandings of Plato's doctrine. Existence, being and truth all admit of degrees, with forms possessing each to a higher degree than the sensibles that serve as the objects of opinion.

### 3. PROCLUS ON KNOWLEDGE AND OPINION

One thing that Proclus says that we most certainly do not find in Plato is the claim that the objects of opinion are simultaneously *gnôston* and *agnôston* – 'knowable and not knowable', if we were to adhere to the traditional ways of translating *gnôsis* and *gnôston* that people use in dealing with this passage in the *Republic*. While Plato says that the many beautifuls both 'are and are not', he never says that they are both simultaneously *gnôston* and *agnôston*. If we were to follow the conventions that most translators observe in dealing with Plato's text, we would say that the many are both objects of knowledge (or things that are knowable) and objects of ignorance or things about which there can be no knowledge. Since most contemporary philosophers treat knowledge as a propositional attitude (a subject, S, knows *that P*), this would yield the result that Proclus supposes that some propositions are both knowable and unknowable.

We prefer to avoid translations that will raise a philosophical reader's hackles immediately because we think Proclus is not simply being stupid here. There is perhaps a philosophical point to be made. Accordingly, we have opted to translate *gnôsis* and related terms by 'understanding'. In English, 'understanding' can connote a condition that is wider than knowledge of a single proposition (or perhaps even a set of propositions). This is an advantage, since Proclus mostly speaks of understanding *things* rather than propositions. Moreover, understanding admits of degrees. Some things I understand very thoroughly; other

<sup>10</sup> *Plat. Theol.* III 43.19–22 Ἐνταῦθα τοίνυν ἐν τῷ πρώτῳ μικτῷ τὰ τρία ταῦτα πέφηνε, τὸ σύμμετρον, τὸ ἀληθές, τὸ καλόν. Καὶ τὸ μὲν σύμμετρον τοῦ ἐν εἶναι τὸ ὄν αἴτιον τῷ μικτῷ, τὸ δὲ ἀληθές τοῦ ὄντως εἶναι, τὸ δὲ καλὸν τοῦ νοητὸν εἶναι.

things less so. Some things can be understood completely; other things less so. Finally, the degree of understanding an agent has of a thing may depend upon the manner in which she understands it. The person who understands the causes of a phenomenon has a better and more reliable understanding of it. Thus the moderately informed driver understands enough to find and replace a blown fuse in her car, but the auto-electrician understands much more completely what is happening with the vehicle and what needs to happen in order that it should stop blowing fuses on that circuit. If this is plausible, then what Proclus is insisting on when he says that ‘the many’ are both *gnôston* and *agnôston* is that they are subject to a kind of limited understanding.<sup>11</sup>

Moving beyond these preliminaries about translation, how can one express Proclus’ taxonomy of psychic states that get things right and those that get things wrong?<sup>12</sup> In Proclus’ epistemology, the soul has a cognitive power (*dynamis gnôstikê*) which is divided into two sub-faculties: one which is doxastic or related to opinion (*doxastikê*), the other of which is related to knowledge (*epistêmonikê*) (266.4–5). Proclus is well aware that there are passages in the Platonic corpus that recommend the view that the doxastic and epistemic sub-faculties could be directed upon the same objects. Referring to *Meno* 98a, he says that knowledge (*epistêmê*) is understanding (*gnôsis*) that is established through reasoning about the cause, while (true?) opinion is understanding of *the same things* but without such reasoning about the cause.<sup>13</sup> But, Proclus points out, Plato gives a different account in the *Timaeus*. When understanding concerns intelligible things (*noêta*), then it is intelligence (*nous*) and knowledge (*epistêmê*), but when understanding concerns sensibles, it is opinion (*doxa*) and belief (*pistis*).<sup>14</sup> So Proclus seems aware of the

<sup>11</sup> In spite of these advantages, ‘understanding’ for *gnôsis* is awkward for other reasons. In English, ‘knowable’ nicely catches the frequently modal force of *gnôston*, while ‘understandable’ grates on the nerves a bit. ‘Un-understandable’ grates on the nerves a lot. ‘Not able to be understood’ or ‘not understood’ is wordier but less irritating. *Agnôia* rendered as ‘ignorance’ isn’t cognate with *gnôsis* rendered as ‘understanding’ unless we move to ‘lack of knowledge’. ‘Lack of understanding’ is no worse in that regard though. However, both ‘knowledge’ and ‘understanding’ lack an adjectival form and this turns out to be important for stating Proclus’ view clearly. Lacking an adjectival form for ‘understanding’ we could rely on the fact that *gnôsis* has a loan word in English: we could use ‘gnostic’. But this has overtones of mystic, hidden knowledge. So we will use ‘cognitive’ as we did in volume I of this series.

<sup>12</sup> The most thorough treatment is Helmig (2017).

<sup>13</sup> I. 263.1–3 ἐπιστήμην μὲν εἶναι γνώσιν δεθεῖσαν αἰτίας λογισμῶ, δόξαν δὲ τὴν ἀνευ αἰτίας τῶν αὐτῶν γνώσιν.

<sup>14</sup> I.263.3–8 λέγεται δὲ καὶ ἡ τῶν αἰσθητῶν γνώσις παρ’ αὐτῷ δόξα τῆς ἐπιστήμης τῶν νοητῶν οὐσης, ὡς ἐν Τιμαίῳ παραδέδοται, ὅταν μὲν ἡ περὶ τὰ ὄντα ἡ γνώσις, νοῦν <καί> ἐπιστήμην ἀποτελεῖσθαι ἐξ ἀνάγκης, ὅταν δὲ περὶ τὰ αἰσθητά, δόξας καὶ πίστεις.

texts that tend to support what contemporary interpreters call the Two Worlds Thesis<sup>15</sup> and those texts that do not.

In the context of the *Republic*, Proclus takes Plato to be using a division that is subtly different from the *Timaeus*. The *Republic* operates, not with a distinction between intelligibles and sensibles, but instead with a distinction between the form or *eidos*, which is one, and the many (*ta polla*), which are individuals or particulars (*merika* or *kath' hekasta*). This is not simply equivalent to the distinction between intelligibles and sensibles, however, since the forms in the *Republic* V argument include both participated and unparticipated forms (*in Remp.* I 259.11–12). This is an important distinction for Proclus and one that he invokes in his explanation of the objections to the theory of forms in the *Parmenides*. The participated form is the one that is present in the many instances, while the latter is the paradigmatic cause of the unity that is participated. The unparticipated form is a 'one that is prior to the many', while the participated form is 'a one that is present in the many'. By virtue of being present in the many, it is 'one and not one'. The participant in which the participated form is present is said to be 'not one and one' (*ET* 24). That is to say, such unity as sensible things enjoy, they enjoy by virtue of being made something or other by the forms in which they participate.<sup>16</sup>

This ontological distinction between 'one' (including participated and unparticipated forms) versus 'many' creates a complication for epistemology, for while participated forms are definable (*in Parm.* 986.19–24), the unparticipated ones are grasped immediately and non-discursively through intellect (*in Parm.* 985.11–14). So the things that serve as the contrast class to the many (i.e. the objects of opinion) in the division in the *Republic* are in fact understood in quite different ways.

<sup>15</sup> The thesis claims, more precisely, that knowledge and opinion are distinct states with distinct objects: knowledge is only ever of forms, while opinion is only ever of sensibles. Though it is a natural way of reading the *Republic* V argument, the Two Worlds thesis sits uneasily with other features of the *Republic*. First, Socrates himself reports what the Good is like, but claims not to have knowledge of it. This suggests that there is some lesser cognitive state (could it be opinion?) which concerns forms. Second, the political authority of the philosopher-rulers is grounded in their knowledge of the forms. But if this knowledge of the forms finds no application at all in relation to the sensibles that are objects of opinion, then how does their *epistēmē* or *gnōsis* of forms qualify them to direct affairs in the 'Cave' that is the world of Becoming? These objections are not, perhaps, insuperable, but they certainly make the Two Worlds reading *prima facie* unpalatable. Proclus certainly denies one part of the Two Worlds reading: human beings have a kind of opinionative or doxastic grasp of the Forms and this condition, which is less than *epistēmē* in the strong sense, undergirds all kinds of cognitive processes, including object recognition. Cf. Helmig (2013), 263–70.

<sup>16</sup> For an overview of Proclus' use of the participated/unparticipated distinction, see d'Hoiné (2017).

This complexity on the side of *gnôsis* of things that are one perhaps paves the way for a corresponding complexity in relation to understanding of the many. Throughout Essay 10 Proclus seems to be concerned exclusively with true opinions. False opinions seem to be consigned to ignorance. In any event, on the one hand, he allows that sensible things can be understood (*gignôskein*) through sense perception. But for this understanding to be a rational understanding (*logikê gnôsis*) it must involve the doxastic sub-faculty mentioned above. While sense organs are affected by the bodies that are perceived, opinion results from deployment of the soul's innate *logoi* or concepts.<sup>17</sup> The higher faculties of the soul, like the opinionative faculty, are impassive in relation to the lower faculties (e.g. perception). So when Paris perceives Helen and comes to hold the opinion or *logikê gnôsis* that she is beautiful, this involves the soul's active deployment of its own internal *logoi* in response to the affections of the passive and irrational faculty of sense.<sup>18</sup>

There is a further complexity involved in opinions such as the one that Thersites is ugly. The soul's innate *logoi* are consequences of higher intelligible entities: they are lower products at the psychic level corresponding to intelligible forms. But not every concept that we deploy in the discursive judgements of the doxastic faculty corresponds to such an innate *logos*. Some of the things in the soul are, as Proclus says, 'later-born' or *hysterogenês* and merely concepts (*noêmata*) – not *logoi*. Ugly is such a concept. It is, to be sure, a kind of one in contrast to a many. But it does not correspond to an innate *logos* that is derived from a form, for this would entail the existence of a form of the Ugly – a consequence that Proclus is concerned to deny both here and in his *Parmenides Commentary*. So we have three things that are general or universal: 1) the unparticipated form that serves as the paradigmatic cause of 2) the participated form and 3) the later-born concepts. These are, respectively, 'before the many, in the many, and after the many' (260.16). For things that are natural, we have all three. For things, like ugliness, that are contrary to nature, we have only the latter two: there is no paradigmatic cause of ugliness.

#### 4. THE PHILOSOPHICAL CHARACTER

It will be evident to readers of Essay 10 that Proclus' focus is squarely, even exclusively, on the ontological commitment of the true lovers of learning. He does not discuss other points which Socrates makes in this

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *in Tim.* I 248.25–9 and 292.27–293.5.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Helmig (2013), 223–60.

part of the discussion, such as how the philosophers who are characterised by this true love of learning will in fact be better able to govern the ideal state. This central question, which motivates the Platonic discussion in the first place, is succinctly answered at the beginning of Essay 11 (I 269.6–7 ‘the affairs which are governed by them will come to resemble the universals’), but Proclus does not see fit to spell the point out in Essay 10 itself.

He is also strikingly silent on the other features of philosophers which Socrates outlines: there is nothing about the all-encompassing breadth of the true philosopher’s studies (474c–475d), nor does he discuss Socrates’ sketch of the main character traits of the philosopher such as truthfulness (485c), absence of falsehood (485d), and disinterest in physical pleasures (485e). Of course, these are all traits which Proclus also considers ideal, and which Marinus ascribes to Proclus himself, explicitly or implicitly, in his biographical portrait of his master. We need not leap to the conclusion that Proclus is disinterested in the personal and political aspects of Plato’s discussion. Rather, it appears that he has dedicated his essay to the most difficult part of the *Republic*’s treatment of the nature of philosophers and their knowledge: clarification of the distinctions between knowledge, opinion and ignorance and their respective objects.

Lastly, it may be added that Proclus only discusses relatively briefly in this essay the Good beyond being, when the subject arises in the context of the different kind of non-being that is the object of ignorance (I 265.16–26). The superessential non-being of the Good is deliberately put to one side in order to clarify the lines of the distinctions which Proclus is concerned with making. The Good beyond being will also be the subject of Essay 11, which accompanies closely and builds upon Essay 10.

258 *On the discussion in the Fifth Book of the*  
 Republic *demonstrating what kind the love of*  
 5 *learning of philosophers is, and what kind that*  
*of the majority.*

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<I. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE BEAUTIFUL AND  
 THE MANY BEAUTIES: 258.6–260.28>

In the fifth book of the *Republic*, wishing to understand what the difference is between philosophers and lovers of opinion (*philodoxos*), [Plato] concludes by showing that while philosophers embrace understanding (*gnôsis*) of universals (*ta katholou*), lovers of opinion [embrace understanding] of particulars (*merika*). For [he says that] while the [lovers of  
 10 opinion] only desire to learn the many beautifuls,<sup>19</sup> philosophers [desire to learn] that which is simply beautiful. In order to show this, he establishes first what the difference is between the simply beautiful and the many beautifuls. And he shows that the former is one, but the latter are this very thing in multiple instances (476a). And again, he shows from  
 15 opposites that beauty itself (*to autokalon*) is one. This is because if the opposites are two, beautiful and ugly, each of these is one, since two is the coming together of two ones. And he shows from the opposites, because certainly it is not possible to speak of the opposites as anything other than two, nor is it possible to say that the two are made up of  
 20 anything but two ones. Therefore the beautiful is one and the ugly is one, but the many beautifuls and the many uglies are this same thing in multiple instances. So the beautiful is not the same as the beautifuls nor the ugly the same as the uglies.

<sup>19</sup> ‘The many beautifuls’ (*ta polla kala*) would normally be rendered as ‘many beautiful things’. We refrain from doing so in order to preserve the ambiguity that permits Plato and Proclus to move seamlessly from particulars that share in Beauty Itself, to the shares of Beauty in those things, to the many acts of awareness of beauty in the soul (in Proclus’ case), to many accounts or *nomima* of what beauty is (in Plato’s case). For the use that Plato makes of the ambiguity of *ta polla kala* in the *Republic* V argument against the sight-lovers, see Baltzly (1997).

The fact that there are many beautifuls and many uglies, he established from what is self-evident (*enargeia*).<sup>20</sup> For since these are in communion with bodies, as he says (476a4–7), and with actions (*praxis*), the two [opposites] became many. Each of them exists both in the activities (*energeia*) of souls and in the compositions of bodies. 25 And if, by the fact of being in communion with one another,<sup>21</sup> they produce many, it is clear from these things that they [sc. the unitary 259 opposites] are not separate from the many, if in fact they in some way are in communion with them. Since indeed [Plato] clearly calls the many ‘participating’ and the forms ‘participated’.<sup>22</sup> If this is true, he seems to assume the [forms in their immanence] in particulars; Socrates, indeed, spent time on these definable (*horistos*) forms,<sup>23</sup> and 5 Aristotle says that Socrates ascended from spending time on definitions to conceptualising (*ennoia*) of the forms.<sup>24</sup> What is more, going forward [in the dialogue], [Socrates] says (479e) that those things exist in themselves (*kath’ hauta*), being ‘identical to themselves’ and in general<sup>25</sup> resembling the forms. So if it is necessary to combine these 10 and the prior [realities] to one another, it must be said that Socrates

<sup>20</sup> A term that has a technical usage in Epicurean epistemology; cf. Sextus M. 7.211–16. In this context, even the Epicureans’ criterion of truth (viz. perception) is sufficient to establish that there are a plurality of beautiful things. This far even the lover of sights and sounds can travel.

<sup>21</sup> It is ambiguous exactly what is in communion with what. Are the unitary opposites in communion with one another, or is a single unitary opposite (e.g. beauty) as it exists in the composition of a body in communion with that same opposite as it exists in a soul? We think it is likely that it is the latter and that this reflects Proclus’ background assumptions about the formation of belief or *doxa*.

<sup>22</sup> Cf. Proclus’ definitions of ‘participating’ and ‘participated’ in *ET* prop. 23 and Festugière’s n. 1 on p. 63 of his translation.

<sup>23</sup> Definable forms are participated forms as immanent in things and are to be distinguished from the transcendent and unparticipated forms. The latter are not subject to definition, since they are partless and simple (*in Parm.* 985.11–14). Instead, they are grasped in a unitary act of intellection or *noêsis* – a view that Proclus takes to be legitimated by Plato’s *Seventh Letter* (342c). The contrast between definable (participated) forms and indefinable, unparticipated forms is made clearly at *in Parm.* 986.19–24: ‘forms at the level of the Soul and sense-perception are definable, and so in general are all those entities which come into existence according to a paradigmatic cause [sc. the unparticipated forms], and such as are said to participate in the Forms. But as for the primary Forms which neither proceed forth according to paradigms nor participate in them, they are not definable but only apprehensible in intellect’ (trans. Dillon and Morrow).

<sup>24</sup> Cf. *Metaphys.* 1.6, 987b1–4 and 13.4, 1078b17–31 with Syrianus’ pointed remarks on Aristotle’s claim that Socrates did not separate the forms in his *Commentary on Metaphysics* book 13, 104, 33, ff.

<sup>25</sup> With Festugière we take τὰ πολλά (259.9) as adverbial, and agree that it does in effect equate here to τὰ πάντα. We have, however, translated as ‘in general’ rather than ‘in

combines the whole category of universals, both the participated and the unparticipated,<sup>26</sup> and that he with good reason distinguishes from these the multiple and the particular. And he begins from the participated forms, because he also argues from opposites, since among  
 15 participating objects it is not only beauty that exists, but also the ugly, through the inconsistency of things participating. He concludes with the unparticipated forms, which are entirely existent things and consistent with themselves. For this reason he no longer makes mention<sup>27</sup> of the ugly nor of privations in general, because there are no diminutions (*sterêsis*) of forms among the unparticipated forms, nor substantial realisations (*hypostasis*) of evils.<sup>28</sup> Unless someone should say that intellect knows the ugly by means of knowing the beautiful, not because the ugly is one of the ugly things here, but since it introduces a limitation by diminution of the beautiful. For not every departure [from a form] departs in the same way, but there is one departure  
 20 from the beautiful proper to soul, another to body. In the latter case this departs to the point of destruction, in the former to the point of a certain kind of life.<sup>29</sup>

So if these views prevail and the ugly exists in the participating objects, we must take up discussion of the contraries, I mean the beautiful  
 260 and the ugly, and the [qualities] existing in the underlying subjects and

all respects' ('de tout point') to convey the slight and uncharacteristic vagueness of Proclus' expression here.

<sup>26</sup> We amend Kroll's μέθεκτον with Festugière to ἀμέθεκτον. In his discussion of definable, participated forms and intellectual, unparticipated forms in the *Parmenides Commentary*, Proclus notes a potential danger of lumping the two kinds together. Some people are misled by the fact that Plato uses 'the F itself' to refer to both kinds indifferently to assume that there are forms for evil things or artefacts. They are misled by Plato's talk of 'impiety itself' in the *Euthyphro* or 'the shuttle itself' in *Cratylus*. This language can be used to distinguish forms of either kind from particulars. But one must not conclude that there is an intelligible, unparticipated form wherever one finds language such as 'the F itself'.

<sup>27</sup> We read μέμνηται here rather than the MS μεμνήσθαι. With the MS reading, it is necessary to supply ῥητέον ἐστι ('one must say') from several lines earlier. The sense is not significantly affected in any case.

<sup>28</sup> Festugière's choice of 'diminution' rather than 'privation' for *sterêsis* is justified here, as it is not a privation of the form which is meant but a diminution or dilution of its presence in the participating object due to the presence of its opposite.

<sup>29</sup> Kroll's conjecture of πονηρᾶς for ποιᾶς may well be correct, in which case the sense will be 'to the point of a wicked life'. In any case, as Festugière observed (65 n. 2), the greater challenge here is the connection of thought in this paragraph, and especially the logic of the γάρ in line 23. It appears to us that the sentence introduced by this particle explains further the sense in which intellect (which does not have a form of ugliness) can know ugliness. It knows it, broadly speaking, because it knows the beautiful, and so can anticipate the kinds of departure from the form in sensible objects, even though those departures are not all of the same kind.



fighting one another concerning the same underlying subject.<sup>30</sup> And the argument [of Socrates] seems to move from the forms close to the many to the ones that are more remote, arriving at the most elevated. But what is said is common to all forms, both the participated and the unparticipated. Since indeed you might even say that the unparticipated forms are participated in a sense, but in the sense that they give a share of themselves, and the participated forms are existent (*onta*) and self-identical, not as the unparticipated forms are, but in so far as they are themselves everlasting. Therefore it is common to all the forms, both of the transcendent and of those present in the many, that each is one and unique of its kind (*monogenês*) in distinction from the many, and individually self-identical, not different at different times. And the many, antithetically to these, are not unique of their kind, but are indeed multiple, nor do they only exist, but they also do not exist, are not everlasting, but are in fact destructible. Therefore if someone should say that [only] these two things exist, the particular (*to merikon*) and the Form (*idea*),<sup>31</sup> he would also be compelled to hold that the ugly is some one thing in contrast to the many instances and to say that there is a Form (*idea*) of ugliness. And if each form (*eidos*) is logically distinct from the particular, he would say nothing else than that there is one form (*eidos*) of the ugly. But this consideration does not altogether necessitate there being a Form (*idea*) [of ugliness], but something which exists in particulars by declination (*apoptôsis*) from the Form (*idea*), and which is called a form (*eidos*) as it is common to many particulars, or which is ‘later-born’ (*hysterogenês*) in souls as a concept (*noêma*), not arising in them from above, but from below.<sup>32</sup> From these points it is

<sup>30</sup> Compare *Phaedo* 102d, ff. where the share of the Tâll in Simmias must either flee or be destroyed with the approach of its opposite, Shortness.

<sup>31</sup> Proclus is careful about his terminology in this passage, reserving ‘*idea*’ for unparticipated Forms grasped by intellect and using ‘*eidos*’ for universals in general, as contrasted with particulars. The final position is that not every general predication implies an intelligible Form corresponding to that predicate. Some participated forms are in things and in the soul and these correspond to intelligible paradigms. But other general concepts (*noêmata*) are predicated on the basis of our experience of the ways in which particulars fall short of participation in those forms that are participated. These are merely concepts and ‘later-born’.

<sup>32</sup> These items are universal in the sense that they apply to many, but they are sharply distinguished from the *logoi* in the soul that are derived from the very same source as the participated forms in things. Cf. in *Parm.* 892.29–35: “This ‘later-born’ entity, then, which is called a concept (*noêma*) is obviously different from a substantial reason-principle (*ousiôdos logos*). For the later-born is a dimmer entity than the many, inasmuch as it arises from them and is not prior to them, whereas the reason-principle is more perfect than they. Whence the former is less substantial than the many particulars, whereas the latter is more substantial and inexpressibly more perfect than objects of sense’ (trans. after Dillon and Morrow).

clear that things in accordance with nature are of three sorts: before  
 many objects, in the many, and after the many. By contrast things con-  
 25 trary to nature are of two sorts: in the many and after the many.<sup>33</sup> It is  
 clear that it is not [only] the Form (*idea*) which [Socrates] distinguished  
 from the multiple objects, because the division would be incomplete,  
 since there are other things besides these [two], namely [the forms]  
 immanent in particulars and the later-born [concepts].

<II. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN UNDERSTANDING  
 AND OPINION: 260.29–264.20>

<A. Exegesis of the text of 476c–480a: 260.29–262.7>

When he has distinguished these things, [Socrates] shows that the form  
 30 is entirely subject to understanding (*gnôstos*),<sup>34</sup> but the many both are and  
 261 are not able to be understood, being in the middle between being and  
 non-being, since they are in a state of becoming,<sup>35</sup> and becoming is  
 between these two things. But the forms are ungenerated, since they  
 are everlasting. So if the three states are distinct – being, becoming, and  
 non-being – and the two extremes are not in contact, but the interme-  
 5 diate participates in both being and not being, it follows to see – since  
 being is able to be understood and not being is not able to be under-  
 stood (for Socrates has established these things) – how the intermediate  
 [between them] stands.

<sup>33</sup> The contrast which Proclus draws here between the three levels at which beauty (that which is in accordance with nature) appears and the two levels where that which is contrary to nature arises, makes explicit what is implicit in his immediately preceding argument. Since there is no form of ugliness to contrast with the form of beauty, we cannot see that which is contrary to nature as existing at the level of the forms. It does, however, exist at the two lower points (in material objects and ‘after’ them, that is, in our perception of these objects). That is, the declination from the form exists in the multiple objects which attempt to participate in it, and is then apprehended by our souls’ viewing these more or less unsatisfactory objects.

<sup>34</sup> On our choice of ‘understandable’ for *gnôstos* and ‘understanding’ for *gnôsis* see the Introduction to this essay.

<sup>35</sup> The contemporary literature on the difficult argument here in Book V distinguishes a variety of ways in which Forms ‘entirely are’, while sensibles both ‘are and are not’. These include predicative readings of ‘being’ (i.e. the Form of F is only ever F, while sensible things are both F and not F), as well as veridical readings (i.e. the contents that are known are only ever true, while the contents that are believed include things both true and false). Proclus takes the standard Neoplatonic ‘degrees of existence’ reading: Forms ‘entirely are’ by virtue of being unchanging, while sensibles both ‘are and are not’ by virtue of coming to be. See further in our Introduction to this essay.

He shows that in fact the intermediate is simultaneously understandable and not understandable. Then, having shown that the understanding which is truly understanding does not participate in the opposite (because none of the purely (*eilikrinôs*) existing things is infected with its opposite, for example the white with black, or the hot with cold, or one contrary with another), he shows that having opinion differs from truly understanding. While the one makes mistakes, the other is without error, if it is indeed purified of ignorance, because ignorance (*agnoia*) is an error of the faculty (*dynamis*) concerned with understanding (*gnôstikos*). And if having opinion is different from truly understanding, but is a kind of understanding nevertheless (and he took this position, because anyone who has opinion has some understanding), it would also be different from ignorance. Therefore [opinion] is either prior to both [truly understanding and ignorance], or it is posterior to both (being something different from them), or it is intermediate. But surely it is not prior to both, since then it would not participate in ignorance, which [truly] understanding does not receive. Nor is it posterior to both, since then it would not participate at all in genuine understanding, which ignorance does not receive. Therefore it is intermediate between them. So if [true] understanding is of the forms which truly exist, and ignorance is of not being, opinion is of generated things (*genêta*). Therefore let it be said in this way:

The many beautifuls are generated. Generated things are between being and not being. The things between being and not being are objects of opinion. Therefore the many beautifuls are objects of opinion.

And again: The forms solely are. The things that solely are are alone understandable. Therefore the forms alone are understandable.

That which does not at all exist is not at all one. Anything that is understandable is some one thing, if indeed the one who understands understands some one thing. Therefore it is not possible to understand that which does not at all exist.

When these things have been shown, he shows the points which follow from them in this way:

Philosophers desire to understand the forms. Those who desire to understand the forms are friends of understanding (*gnôsis*). The conclusion is clear.

Or again: the majority wish to learn about (*manthanein*) particulars. Those who wish to learn about particulars wish to learn about objects of opinion. Those wishing to learn about objects of opinion are friends of opinion (*philodoxos*). Therefore the many are friends of opinion.

And thirdly: The many are friends of opinion. Philosophers are not friends of opinion. Therefore the majority are not philosophers. And this was the aim of the discussion.

So in this passage, only this point is worth stopping for discussion, namely that when he recounts in this passage the types of ordinary people, he places among them both craftsmen (*technikos*) and practical men (*praktikos*). These in a sense also have understanding of the forms, from which they work their craft or take action. But one must comprehend that they cast this visualisation (*episkepsis*) of the forms before themselves by means of particulars, and their goal is not understanding of the forms themselves, but understanding of manufactured objects and actions – [an understanding] through which they have a proto-apprehension of the forms, albeit just a little.<sup>36</sup> Therefore these people are far from practising philosophy, because they do not ascend from particulars, but rather cower among them, and do not consider (*skopein*) the forms for the forms' sake.

Therefore Socrates with good reason distinguished philosophers from these people, since philosophers do indeed ascend from perceptible objects to the forms and do not even remain among those alone, but proceed to the intelligible and transcendent causes themselves of the forms.<sup>37</sup> So someone who was really attentive would of necessity make these divisions concerning these things.

<B. What is meant by understanding and opinion: 262.23–263.25>

Since [Socrates] himself has distinguished opinion and understanding from one another, it is worthwhile to see what he takes each of these to be in this discussion. Opinion, on the one hand, is the name given in his discussion to the conclusion of an activity of discursive reasoning, as he states in the *Sophist* (263e, ff.), when he says that discursive reasoning (*dianoia*) is a dialogue of the soul itself with itself, and opinion is the end point of discursive reasoning, since it is the unique judgement of the things which that [reasoning] has reasoned about (*sylogizesthai*). On the other hand, understanding that does not involve the cause<sup>38</sup> possessed by the soul is also said by him to be opinion, as he distinguished in the *Meno* (98a): while scientific knowledge (*epistēmē*) is understanding

<sup>36</sup> δι' ἃ τὰ εἶδη καὶ ὅπως οὖν προεννοοῦσιν. The verb *proennoeō* is *hapax* in Proclus, but it seems implausible that here it bears the usual sense of 'to consider beforehand'.

<sup>37</sup> That is to say, they ascend from the definable participated form present as a unity in the particulars to the unparticipated form that is the ontologically prior paradigmatic cause of the one in the many. This they would grasp non-discursively through *nous*. Beyond even this, one would ideally ascend to the Good itself, which the philosopher learns in a different way again; see on this Essay 11 (especially 280.8–281.7).

<sup>38</sup> ἡ ἀνευ αἰτίας γνῶσις. But the context of the *Meno* makes clear that this is not understanding that has no cause, but rather the kind of understanding that lacks *logismos* concerning the *aitia* of the thing understood.

(*gnôsis*) established by reasoning about the cause, opinion is understanding of the same things without the cause. But it is also said in his discussion that understanding of perceptible things is opinion, while scientific knowledge (*epistêmê*) is of intelligibles (*noêta*), as it is handed down in the *Timaeus* (37b): when understanding (*gnôsis*) concerns really existing things, it results necessarily in intellect (*nous*) and scientific knowledge (*epistêmê*), but when it is concerned with perceptible things, it must result in opinions (*doxa*) and beliefs (*pistis*). 5

While these things have been defined thusly in other texts concerning opinion and scientific knowledge, here he distinguishes all things into the forms and particulars, and relates, on the one hand, scientific knowledge to the forms and calls it understanding (*gnôsis*) itself since it is unadulterated and not receptive to its opposite. For indeed, in the case of other things,<sup>39</sup> any instance which is not mixed with its opposite is pure – for instance, we call something truly white in which there is no presence as well of black. On the other hand, he relates the multiple and particular things, around which non-philosophers wander, to opinion. Even if these things are understood as perceptibles by means of the senses, still the rational understanding (*logikê gnôsis*) of them arises through opinion, and they are in a strict sense objects of opinion (*doxastos*), just as universals (*ta katholou*) are objects of scientific knowledge (*epistêtos*). For while there can be bodies of scientific knowledge about these things [sc. universals], it is impossible to acquire scientific knowledge of particulars. In a similar vein, Aristotle too said in his works on demonstrations (*Anal. Post.* I 33 88b30) that scientific understanding is directed to necessary things, and opinion to contingent matters,<sup>40</sup> saying nothing other than what Socrates says in this passage, when he calls objects of opinion wandering, but calls universals, the objects of scientific knowledge, unchanging. 10 15 20 25

<1. Understanding and things that uniquely exemplify a form:

263.26–264.20>

So the fact that among sub-lunary things the form appears in multiple instances, shows vividly that multiple things exist contingently (*endechomenôs*). But because celestial things exist as unique instances (*monadikos*), the form that is participated would not seem to differ from

<sup>39</sup> ἐπὶ τῶν ἄλλων. That is, of things other than the forms. Proclus means that even in the case of material objects we call pure those instances which do not show any trace of the opposite to the qualities in which they participate.

<sup>40</sup> As Festugière observes (70 n.1), Aristotle phrases this slightly differently: ἡ μὲν ἐπιστήμη καθόλου καὶ δι' ἀναγκάων ... τῶν ἀναγκαίων ... εἶναι τὴν ἐπιστήμην.

264 the particular or participant.<sup>41</sup> Except that even among those [celestial]  
things, the reasoning that belongs to scientific knowledge discovers the  
difference between the two. For the form is cause of the existence es-  
tablished in them, but the particular character is the cause of change.  
5 The possibility of being moved and being different at different times  
belongs also to them since they are particular. For this reason Timaeus  
(28a) also said that everything generated is an object of opinion, be-  
cause in as much as it *is* generated it is of this kind, whether it has the  
quality of being generated by its essence (*ousia*) or whether by its ac-  
tivity (*energeia*).<sup>42</sup> So that if indeed there is something belonging to the  
celestials which is particular but exists unchangingly, it experiences this  
[unchanging state] because of its close approach to the form, seeming  
10 to differ in no respect from the form, so that there indeed the first (*ta*  
*prôta*) [of the celestials] has the appearance (*morphê*) of the things prior  
to them.<sup>43</sup> I mean that since they are the first of particular things, the  
celestial bodies possess the impression of the forms while remaining al-  
ways in the same state, but they nevertheless bear as a mark of the indi-  
viduality of particular things the fact that they change position. For the  
15 form is not in a place (because every form is bodiless), but the particular  
object, because it possesses a body, participates in the form in a bodily  
way. Perhaps there is no other of the divided things which is of this kind  
rather than having a divided body, and every form becoming embodied  
becomes partial.<sup>44</sup> But in as much as it is outside of body, being solely

<sup>41</sup> The Sun, Moon, Venus, etc. undercut the equation of form/participant opposition with the one/many opposition, since the form of the Sun can be participated in by one thing only. The problem of 'monadic forms' was much discussed by the Neoplatonists. See the survey of views of Porphyry, Iamblichus, and Syrianus on the issue at *in Tim.* I 439.2–447.32. At *in Tim.* II 62.17–31 Proclus claims that the Sun could only be made of the celestial fire that it is, in fact, made of. Moreover, there is no other thing which that celestial material could compose. Thus the monadic celestials stand in contrast to the multiple things in the sub-lunary realm that are only contingently composed of a matter that could and will subsequently compose something else.

<sup>42</sup> While sub-lunary things possess this quality of being generated by their nature as sub-lunary things, celestial things possess it only by their activity.

<sup>43</sup> At *in Tim.* I 443.10, ff. Proclus – relating the views of Syrianus – claims that the monadic heavenly bodies are an image of the Demiurge's 'primary creation', unassisted by the secondary or younger gods. All unique participants in forms, such as the Sun or the Moon, imitate the uniqueness of the creator and his intelligible paradigm. Proclus connects this idea to *Rep.* 597c1–9 where Plato deduces the uniqueness of the form of bed made by God from its role as form. While obviously not accepting the idea that God makes forms, Proclus draws from this the premise that what exists as the primary creation of a higher level (*prôtôs*) exists uniquely.

<sup>44</sup> Contrast the different treatment of the celestial gods in Iamblichus, *De Myst.* I.17.

incorporeal, it is solely form. For this reason too all separable things (*ta chôrista*) are distinct from one another in form. 20

<III. TWO QUESTIONS ABOUT THE OBJECTS OF  
UNDERSTANDING: 264.21–268.8>

So one must think in this way about each of these two things, opinion and scientific knowledge. And since, when he began the inquiry concerning these things, he posed two questions, it is worth saying something about these as well. The first question then which he posed was of this kind: whether each person who understands, understands 25 something or nothing. For ‘someone’ and ‘no one’ are opposites, as are ‘all’ and ‘not all’. And assuming that everyone who understands, understands something, he asked in turn a second question, whether the one who understands something understands something that is or in fact something that is not. And he posed this question because it is different from the one before it. This is because, if ‘being something’ and ‘being’ 30 were the same, and [likewise for] ‘being nothing’ and ‘non-being’, he would not have any reason to ask, whether the one who understands something understands what is or what is not. This would indeed be altogether absurd. But because these things differ, ‘what is not’ and ‘nothing’ are different. And it is clear that ‘nothing’ must altogether be ‘what 5 is not’, but not *vice versa*. For ‘nothing’ and ‘what is not’ would turn out once more to be the same, if they should be convertible one to the other. So, let the very thing which negates ‘nothing’ be assumed – I mean, of course, [there is] ‘the one’ [thing]. Therefore, it is impossible to call this nothing, since the very fact of it being ‘one’ denies that it is ‘nothing’. And since ‘one thing’ and ‘nothing’ are antithetical, so too is ‘being’ in relation to ‘non-being’. And ‘non-being’ has greater extension 10 than ‘nothing’; correspondingly then, the one<sup>45</sup> has greater extension than being. This has been shown in the *First Analytics*.<sup>46</sup> Therefore, if something is being, it participates in one, but it is not therefore [the

<sup>45</sup> Festugière remarks that in the first part of this passage, where he translates τὸ ἓν as ‘une chose’, and where we have likewise translated ‘one thing’, the sense of the One is already present by a sliding of meaning (‘glissement’). This is overtly the meaning of τὸ ἓν in the latter part of the discussion, where we, like Festugière, translate ‘the One’.

<sup>46</sup> Neither Kroll nor Festugière could find anything in Aristotle to support this remark by Proclus, and we have fared no better. Festugière remarks that Aristotle holds ἓν to be identical to ζῷ (vol. 2, 72 n.2).



case] that if something is one, it participates in being. For there has  
 15 been found a type of one, which is non-being.<sup>47</sup>

We have pressed this point sufficiently. But Glaucon said (477a) that  
 each one who understands, understands something that has being, since  
 he is not prepared to see that there is a One which is not being, and is  
 the final object of learning of those who understand the things that have  
 20 being, just as Socrates says the Good is. For this reason in the following  
 part of the text, when Socrates says that the Good exists beyond being  
 and that the Good itself produces being, Glaucon said, ‘Apollo, what  
 extraordinary transcendence’ (VI 509c1–2), because he was not able to  
 fix his gaze upon what is beyond being (*hyperousios*).<sup>48</sup> Socrates finds  
 25 fault with him for his astonishment, saying that Glaucon made this re-  
 mark very facetiously, and he says that he will keep in silence many of  
 the things that he thinks about the topic (509c3–4). And so [Socrates]  
 assumes that each person who understands, understands something that  
 has being (since it is not possible to understand non-being in so much  
 as it does not exist at all), on the basis of the answer from Glaucon,  
 who shows that he cannot distinguish the different ways in which ‘not  
 being’ may be spoken about. Rather he considers that not being is only  
 what does not at all have being.<sup>49</sup> [Socrates] shows that understanding is  
 266 conjoined with being, and ignorance with non-being. When these are  
 entirely distinguished, he shows as well what is intermediate between  
 being and non-being, and says that it is at the same time understandable  
 and not understandable, and that the cognitive power (*gnôstikê dynamis*)  
 5 relating to it is the opinionative one (*doxastikê*), which is different from  
 the power for scientific knowledge (*epistêmonikê*). And since it is neces-  
 sary that he say in what way he distinguishes these two powers and how  
 these powers are, he has assumed this other point in advance, and gives  
 rules only concerning that one.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>47</sup> For purposes of this essay, Proclus keeps brief his discussion of the One beyond being, which he treats more fully in Essay 11.

<sup>48</sup> As on other occasions when he remarks upon his character, Proclus once more treats Glaucon as able to ascend some way towards the intelligible, but not able to follow Socrates along the complete trajectory of the ascent to the One. See further in volume I in our Introduction to Essay 1 (50–1).

<sup>49</sup> The important distinction for Proclus in this context is that between knowledge, which is knowledge of something with being, as distinct from ignorance, which has non-being as its object. This is complicated by the fact that for Proclus what is beyond being (i.e. the One) also, in a different sense, does not have being. The difficulty of following Proclus’ argument here arises from his need to bracket this higher non-being as not relevant to his present discussion.

<sup>50</sup> Proclus states that Socrates is concerned here with the difference between opinion (*doxa*) and scientific knowledge (*epistêmê*), explaining why he has less to say about ignorance.



So the fact that it is necessary to posit opinion and scientific knowledge as powers, we may learn by distinguishing all things into substances (ousia), into powers (dynamis), and into motions (kinêsis), and dividing substances in turn into bodiless and bodily, and powers into productive (poiêtikos) and receptive (pathêtikos), and motions into temporal (chronikos) and eternal (aiônios). When these things are distinguished, one can say that knowledge (gnôsis)<sup>51</sup> and opinion are not substances (because they are *in* something else), nor activities (energeia) (because activities arise from them, by which I mean understanding and having opinions), therefore they are powers. Therefore, if he himself correctly said that powers are a certain kind among the things that exist (477c1), it is not being as a whole which is [the same as] power. And you could refute through this the definition of being written in the *Sophist*, which says that being is to be defined as power, since this is not really Platonic, just as in that text too the Eleatic Stranger has torn that definition to pieces as he proceeded [in his argument]. And it is necessary to examine the form of the expression, that is, how he said, in a manner that was not giving a definition (adioristôs), that powers are a certain kind of the things that exist, but not that powers are [by definition] the things that exist nor, indeed, that all powers are [things that exist]. So that if there are some superessential powers, or if he should say that matter has powers – opposing it [sc. matter] to being and to becoming<sup>52</sup> – the present discussion has nothing to do with these [powers]. This is because power is of three kinds: before being (proousios), involved in being (ousiôdês), and without being (anousios).<sup>53</sup>

And it is evident that one must define powers in this way, as he himself defined them: in terms of that which they have been set over and in terms of what work each carries out. For it is from the fact that their actions (energêma) manifestly differ and from the fact that the subjects

<sup>51</sup> Proclus slips from what has previously been a careful separation of one species, *epistêmê* from its genus *gnôsis*. We translate ‘knowledge’ in keeping with the first line of the paragraph (8–9) where he proposes to distinguish *epistêmê* from *doxa*.

<sup>52</sup> The idea that matter, though lacking in Being, nonetheless has powers is certainly one way in which you could read *Tim.* 48e2, ff. The ‘third kind’ is opposed to Being and Becoming: ἐν μὲν ὡς παραδείγματος εἶδος ὑποτεθέν, νοητὸν καὶ αἰεὶ κατὰ ταῦτ’ ὄν, μίμημα δὲ παραδείγματος δεύτερον, γένεσιν ἔχον καὶ ὁρατόν. Moreover, Timaeus asks of the third kind τίς οὖν ἔχον δύναμιν καὶ φύσιν αὐτὸ ὑποληπτέον; His answer is that it is able to function as the receptacle and the nurse of Becoming.

<sup>53</sup> That is, of the three kinds of power two fall outside of Socrates’ current discussion: those that are above (proousios) and those below (anousios) the capacities involved in being. In restricting powers to just the matters at hand, Plato’s discussion – at least as Proclus understands it – makes a simplifying assumption much like the earlier assumption that the one versus many discussion sets aside the important distinction between participated and unparticipated forms.

267 (*hypokeimenon*) with which their actions are concerned have been distinguished [from one another], that we also both distinguish these powers and call them different from one another. [The condition] ‘that which it has been set over’ indicates the subjects in relation to which it has been arranged, while [the condition] ‘what work it does’ indicates the activity that it has in relation to the subject.<sup>54</sup> For example, the power of knowledge (*epistêmê*) is set over being, while the opinionative one (*doxastikos*) is set over what is, in a way, but also what is not in a way. The former of these makes us able to understand (*gnôstikos*) being, while the latter makes us able to have opinion of what has being in one sense and does not in another. For the ‘that which it is set over’ [condition] does not [merely] show the subject for the power, but rather that which is proposed for its activity.

It is clear in turn that if a power has been set over [its subject], it would not be something primary (*prôton*), but prior to it there is that which arranged it. Likewise, if it does some work, it would not be something final (*eschaton*) – viz. the work that it does is posterior to it. Therefore, a power is among the intermediate things. If this is so, it is clear that each power is the cause of one thing and brings that one thing to completion (*apotelein*) in accordance with this same argument (478a12). This is because if [a single power brought to completion] more than one thing, it would no longer be possible to speak of powers that are distinct from their different effects, nor to speak of causes that are distinct from these [powers].<sup>55</sup> So then there is one power belonging to one effect which it brings about. And even if the same cause should seem to produce more [than one effect], either those [effects] are in some sense one, or the power, though it is in some sense one, is not really one.

Moreover, if each power is colourless and shapeless (for he says that there is no shape or colour of a power to see (477c6–7)), it is clear by the same reasoning that every power is bodiless (*asômatos*), because everything that is defined as body participates in shape. For this reason what Plotinus says (IV.7.8) is also true: that in large bodies there are

<sup>54</sup> Proclus seems to be discussing a specific line in which Socrates gives identity and difference conditions for powers: *Rep.* 477c9–d5 δυνάμεως δ' εἰς ἐκεῖνο μόνον βλέπω ἐφ' ᾧ τε ἔστι καὶ ὁ ἀπεργάζεται, καὶ ταύτῃ ἐκάστην αὐτῶν δύναμιν ἐκάλεσα, καὶ τὴν μὲν ἐπὶ τῷ αὐτῷ τεταγμένην καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ ἀπεργαζομένην τὴν αὐτὴν καλῶ, τὴν δὲ ἐπὶ ἐτέρῳ καὶ ἕτερον ἀπεργαζομένην ἄλλην.

<sup>55</sup> Festugière's note (vol. 2, 74 n. 4) rightly distinguishes the structure of this sentence, in which the second part of the comparison is highly compressed. We think the problem that concerns Proclus is the possibility that the ‘set over’ and ‘work done’ conditions might come apart, so that a single power might be set over two things, but do the same work in relation to each. Thus, *gnôsis* might be set over both forms and particulars and yet perform the same work (knowing) in relation to both.

powers that are not great and in small bodies powers that are not small, because mass does not add to powers, nor does it diminish them. Let us also accept what he says about power in the *Laws*,<sup>56</sup> namely that when it comes to the cognitive powers set over perceptible things, those which know smaller things also know greater ones – just as in the case of intelligible things, those which know greater things also know smaller ones. On the other hand, when it comes to the powers of motion, those which move greater things also move lesser ones, but not *vice versa*, just as passive powers, if they are moved by the lesser powers are also moved by the greater, but not the reverse.

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Now that these points are clarified, it is evident that one must distinguish opinion and understanding because they have been set over different objects, if indeed the object of understanding and the object of opinion differ from one another.

<sup>56</sup> The reference which Proclus intended escaped both Kroll and Festugière. We suspect that Proclus is inferring the principles discussed here on the basis of this remark at 902c5–6 Τὸ περὶ τε αἰσθήσεως καὶ δυνάμεως, ἃρ' οὐκ ἐναντίως ἀλλήλοις πρὸς ῥασιτώνην καὶ χαλεπότητά ἐστιν πεφυκότε; (The context concerns the question of whether the gods' providence extends even to small matters. It turns out that, of course, it does, for nothing escapes the knowledge and perception of the gods (901d), so even small matters will be well looked after.) The principles that Proclus attributes to Plato in this passage are not explicitly stated, but they are implied by this general observation about powers.

## Introduction to Essay 11

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### I. THE SENSES OF 'THE GOOD' AND THE POSSIBILITY OF UNDERSTANDING

In Essay 11 Proclus discusses one of the most memorable sections of the *Republic*: the analogy between the Sun and the Good. His response to this challenging portion of the text is conceptually rich and subtle. The essay builds on the definitions developed in Essay 10 to explore the sense in which the Good can be understood when it is fundamentally unlike other objects of understanding. Essay 11 is also, by its nature, related to Essay 12, on the Cave and the Divided Line. Essay 12, however, makes a fresh start and is pitched in general at a more introductory level, as an overview of Platonic education as a whole.

The first step in Proclus' discussion is establishing three different senses of 'the good' (*to agathon*) in Plato's teaching on the subject. The first of these is 'the good in us' (*to en hêmin agathon* (269.16)), which is neither pleasure nor intellect, and with which he says that Socrates begins in the present passage of the *Republic*. It is, Proclus says (273.6–7), known to everyone that the subject of the initial discussion is the good in us; the soul does everything in order to possess this good, though it cannot, of course, possess the Good transcendent above us (273.12–15). In Essay 11, Proclus has relatively little to say about this lowest good, from which he moves quickly, both in the introduction and subsequently in the discussion of terms (271.7–15), to the good at the level of the intelligibles and to the main topic of this essay, the Good beyond being. The second of the three goods, the form of all good things, is 'the good itself' (*autoagathon*), which exists among the forms alongside 'justice itself' (*autodikaion*) and 'beauty itself' (*autokalon*) (269.23–4). As he clarifies later in the essay, the form of the good does not bring the forms into existence (as that is accomplished by the Good beyond being), but is perfective (*teleiôtikos*) of them (278.27–279.2). The form of the good, like other forms, can be apprehended by intellect.

The third and final sense of the Good, that is, the Good 'beyond being and existence' (270.8 citing *Rep.* 509b9) 'is the cause of existence (*ousia*) for the objects of knowledge, and is itself beyond existence and being altogether, and ... beyond even the good as form'

(271.18–20).<sup>1</sup> It is also, because it is above the intelligibles and is not one of them, above the reach of intellection. It cannot be an object of knowledge (*epistêton*) since knowledge (*epistême*) knows its object by understanding its cause, and the Good has no cause (280.22–4). Yet for Proclus the Good emphatically *is* understandable, and is ‘the final object of learning’ (*eschaton mathêma* (269.7)), for the true lovers of learning defined in Essay 10. It is vital for him, however, to specify the way in which it is understandable and the ways in which it is not. Proclus’ response to this problem, developed at some length in Essay 11, is given in summary at 280.24–281.3:

[The Good] is understandable, therefore, only by a divine impulse (*prosbolê*) greater than intellect, which [Plato] himself calls ‘a ray of soul’, which he says that one must ‘cast upwards’ (III 540a7), throwing it towards that thing, through the subtraction (*aphairesis*) of everything after it.

The phrase ‘ray of the soul’ (*augê tês psychês*) is, as Proclus says, adopted from Plato (540a7). In the passage in question, Socrates has just outlined the education which should be given to the Guardians. After their years of study they have come through various practical and theoretical tests and they reach the final requirement of knowing the Good. To do this they must turn ‘the ray of the soul to gaze upon that which gives light to all’. For Proclus, the phrase describes a kind of understanding which is different from knowledge and most certainly different from opinion. In the only other surviving passage where he quotes it (*in Parm.* 997.22–3), Proclus discusses the way in which, he believes, Parmenides perfects, or initiates Zeno, and transfers him to ‘the unity truer than all reality’.<sup>2</sup> In both of Proclus’ uses of this phrase he is concerned with direct understanding of the One/the Good, as the consummation of a philosophical ascent through and beyond knowledge.

The other key term in Proclus’ formulation, *prosbolê*, is not developed so directly from Plato. On the contrary, Plato’s uses of this word relate to the senses and to the application of physical forces, not to understanding the Good.<sup>3</sup> In Plotinus, however, the relevant senses of this word have changed.<sup>4</sup> Though it is still in use for physical sight (for

<sup>1</sup> Following Festugière’s helpful convention in his translation of this essay, we capitalise this last sense of the Good. See note 17 to our translation and Festugière, vol. 2, 76 n. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Trans. Morrow and Dillon.

<sup>3</sup> On *prosbolê* in a context of physical vision see *Theaetetus* 153e6, *Timaeus* 36c2 and 46b6; on the impact of fire or storm *Laws* 856b7 and of physical impacts in general, as the only things which the materialist ‘Giants’ are able to perceive, *Sophist* 246a10.

<sup>4</sup> It may be added that *prosbolê* has a number of other senses which are not directly relevant to Proclus or his Platonic predecessors.

example at *Enneads* V.5.7.8), it is probably through the analogy taken from Plato himself which was drawn between physical sight and understanding of the intelligibles (and ultimately of the Good itself) that *prosbolê* has come to be used of a direct, super-rational apprehension of the Good. At *Enneads* III.8.10, 27–35 Plotinus writes of the One:

It is certainly none of the things of which it is origin; it is of such a kind, though nothing can be predicated of it, not being, not substance, not life, as to be above all of these things. But if you grasp it by taking away (*apbelôn*) being from it, you will be filled with wonder. And, throwing yourself upon it and coming to rest within it, understand it more and more intimately, knowing it by intuition (*prosbolê*) and seeing its greatness by the things which exist after it and through it.<sup>5</sup>

Proclus would find fault with Plotinus' final suggestion here, that we might know the greatness of the Good 'by the things that exist after it and through it',<sup>6</sup> though this does seem to be at most a supplementary kind of knowledge for Plotinus too. In common to both philosophers, however, is the process of 'taking away' or 'subtracting' even being from our conception of the first principle in order to know it by a special and direct understanding, which for both goes, in the passages cited at any rate, under the name of *prosbolê*.<sup>7</sup>

## 2. THE POSSIBILITIES AND LIMITATIONS OF ANALOGY

In all of this discussion of the senses of 'good' and the way in which we might come to understand the Good beyond being, Proclus is characteristically exact in his formulations. The topic of Essay 11 presents him with a further challenge in defining the meaning of the analogy of the sun, and in imposing limits on the possibilities for interpreting this analogy, and indeed for interpreting analogies in general. Analogy (*analogia*) is for Proclus a type of image (*eikôn*), as is evident from the way in which he refers to Plato's analogy of the sun using the terms *analogia* and *eikôn* interchangeably. An *analogia* is, by implication, not a *symbolon* or *synthêma*, that is, a divinely inspired image or sign. It is this latter type of

<sup>5</sup> Trans. Armstrong (1966–88), vol. 3.

<sup>6</sup> See his discussion of this topic in Essay 11 at 284.22–285.4.

<sup>7</sup> Armstrong's 'intuition' does not seem entirely satisfactory for *prosbolê*, though we confess a degree of dissatisfaction with our own 'divine impulse' for *entheos prosbolê* at 280.27. We have chosen this, as 'intuition' suggests to our ears something less definite, and 'impulse' implies a certain dynamism, albeit in this case of a highly abstract kind. The new translation of *Ennead* III.8 in Gerson, Boys-Stones, Dillon, King, Smith, and Wilberding (2017) opts for 'immediate contact' to convey the sense of *prosbolê* in this context.

sign, the *symbolon*, which for Proclus can function by unlikeness as well as by likeness.<sup>8</sup> In the case of an *analogia*, however, unlikeness is not a possible mode of connection between the sign and that to which it refers, but rather a source of possible error into which interpreters may fall. Analogy, Proclus says, is ‘a risky method ... since there is a fear that we range over topics in some other aspect than the one under which analogy has included it and we corrupt the interpretation with mere sophistry’ (274.21–4). The reference to sophistic activity here (*sophizômetha*) is important: to the sophistic mindset, trained to improvise rhetorical performances from set subject matter, an analogy like that between the sun and Good could certainly serve as a starting point. Nor, we should remember, was sophistic activity remote from Proclus’ educational environment: Syrianus himself gives us one of the surviving commentaries on the rhetorician Hermogenes. Such quasi-philosophical rhetorical improvisation (as Proclus would see it) is the sort of thing that might be practised by the type of ‘philosopher-sophist’ exemplified by Dio Chrysostom, Favorinus of Arles or (on the Latin side) Apuleius.<sup>9</sup> Nonetheless, Proclus is determined that the points of likeness must remain the strict focus in the interpretation of analogies and that such improvisation not be indulged. Though he does not explicitly say so, this will also in practice mean following closely the interpretation of earlier, reputable readers.

In the specific instance before him, the analogy of the sun, Proclus reminds us not to import the sun’s features as a physical body into the comparison: the sun is analogous to the Good in that it is the source of light as the Good is the source of reality, but we should not suppose that because the sun undergoes motion that the Good does too. The sun is not analogous to the Good in that the sun is subject to causation, but only in so far as the sun is a cause. The Good, moreover, raises a special problem for analogy because ‘each of the things after it, as they arise, takes on something inferior to the Good’ (275.3–4). Not only then is analogy itself by its nature a mixture of likenesses to be observed and unlikenesses to be discarded, the special nature of the Good makes it particularly difficult to describe by analogy (or, it may be added, in any other way), and thereby makes it especially important that interpreters limit themselves to the few, specific points of likeness which motivate the analogy.

Given the limitations which Proclus observes that analogy possesses as a form of discourse about the Good, one may well ask why he believes

<sup>8</sup> On the distinction between *eikôn* and *symbolon/synthêma* see volume I, 163–5.

<sup>9</sup> For an apposite example of what Proclus would perhaps regard as inappropriate sophistic appropriation of the image of the Sun from the *Republic*, see Plutarch’s *Amatorius* where *eros* is said to play the same role in relation to the body that the Sun plays in relation to the cosmos, 764c–765d. For discussion, see Hunter (2012), 185–222.

it is employed in this section of the *Republic* at all. His answer depends on the passage's context within the dialogue: Socrates is aware of the limitations of his listeners' understanding, so reveals only a little. In the presence of people like Thrasymachus and Clitophon, he reveals only some of the 'unutterable secrets' (*aporrhêta*). Moreover Glaucon's response when Socrates says that the Good is superessential dissuades him from speaking more fully. Glaucon, he says, 'seems to be stepping into the void in relation to the vision of that which is beyond all things' (274.6–7). Though Socrates would otherwise have spoken 'genuinely theological discourses' about the Good (274.10–11), he is forced to limit his discussion to the analogy which he gives. Given what Proclus goes on to say about the interpretive risks which are inherent in the use of analogy, it may be objected that this instance of the use of analogy in this questionable company carries a particular danger of misinterpretation. The answer to this objection appears to be two-fold: firstly, Socrates has to speak in some way about the Good, 'since it is not possible to know a particular good without the simply Good' (274.14–15). He cannot, in other words, complete his discussion without saying something, within the limitations of his audience and the possibilities of speech itself. Secondly, it is implied that Socrates employs analogy as a kind of coded speech, revealing something of the mysteries that he speaks about, the *aporrhêta*, while still concealing them from those who are not able to understand. A little misunderstanding, it seems, is worth risking in order to communicate what he can, and to fulfil the requirements of his broader argument.

### 3. ALËTHEIA : TRUTH AND REALITY

The translator of Essay 11 is presented with the problem of what to do about 'truth' or *alêtheia*. Most contemporary philosophers treat truth as a property of *representations* – not of things that have no representational content. Thus statements and beliefs may be true or false. Knowledge must be true and what knowledge is *of* – facts or propositions, if we are thinking like modern philosophers – must be true. 'True friends' or 'truly diabolical problems' are merely genuine friends and very difficult problems.

Much of what Plato says about truth in the analogy of the Sun more or less accords with this modern sensibility. In *Republic* 508e, Socrates says that the Good supplies truth to the objects of knowledge and the power – presumably to know – to the one who knows. Provided that we are prepared to treat the Forms that are the objects of knowledge as having some representational content, then this is not too bizarre



perhaps. The Good, we may suppose, makes that content knowable or perhaps we fully know each Form only insofar as we understand it and the things of which it is the cause in relation to the ultimate source of value. Plato tells us that this source of knowledge and truth surpasses them in beauty. This is the *epistemic* aspect of the analogy with the Sun: the Good provides the epistemic counter-part to sunlight that makes things knowable and knowers capable of knowing them. But the Sun is relevantly similar to the Good along another dimension of comparison too. As the Sun is a cause of coming to be, increase and sustenance, so too the Good provides the things that are known with their being (*to einaî*) and existence (*ousia*). Call this the *cosmic* aspect of the analogy: somehow, in some way, the Good plays an explanatory role in relation to the Forms that is parallel to the causal role of the Sun in relation to the realm of Becoming.

The word *alêtheia* presents a problem for the translator of Proclus' Essay 11 because he implicates truth in the cosmic role of the Good as well as its epistemic role. While Plato says that the Good is 'beyond being and existence', Proclus sometimes glosses this as beyond being and *truth* (276.17; 277.15; cf. *Plat. Theol.* II 48.3). In light of this, Festugière frequently translates *alêtheia* as 'Réalité' and the temptation to follow him in this is strong. Surely Proclus cannot seriously mean that truth plays a cosmic as well as an epistemic role. After all, as modern philosophers see these matters, truth is a property of only those 'things' that have representational content. It is one thing to *be* a statement – another to be a *true* one. Moreover, some things that are are not even candidates for being true.

The temptation to read *alêtheia* as *Réalité* should be resisted – at least when one is dealing with Proclus. The reasons for this emerge from considering the relation between his exegesis of the Good in the *Republic* and what we may discern of Proclus' views on the *Philebus*.<sup>10</sup> As we discussed above, Proclus' Essay 11 distinguishes between three 'goods' – the good in us, the good as a Form coordinate with Justice Itself, Beauty Itself, etc., and the Good as super-essential source of all Forms.<sup>11</sup> It is this latter Good – the Good as the One – that Proclus supposes Socrates to be discussing in the analogy with the Sun. The *Philebus*, however, deals with 'the final cause of everything that exists and which permeates everything' (Damasc. *in Phlb.* §7). This is distinguished both from the transcendent Good that is 'beyond being' and

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Combès (1987).

<sup>11</sup> The same three-fold distinction is common to Proclus' discussion of the Good in the *Republic* in *Platonic Theology* II ch. 7.

also from the ‘human good’. Thus the *skopos* of the *Philebus*, according to ‘Iamblichus and the School of Syrianus and Proclus’ is the form of the good, considered as a Form coordinate with Beauty Itself and the others. At *Philebus* 64a–65a we find ourselves, in Plato’s famous phrase, ‘in the vestibule of the Good’. In this vestibule Proclus supposes we find ‘three monads’ that determine the extent to which a mixture is good. These are Symmetry, Beauty, and – importantly for our purposes – Truth. Each of these is assigned a cosmological role:

Truth causes each thing to be wholly and solely what it is, so that it is neither a phantom (for a phantom [*eidôlon*] is the result of disintegration and obliteration of form [*eidōs*]) nor contaminated with something else, which may be its opposite or anything that is different.

(in *Phlb.* §236)

The cosmic role of Truth is importantly similar to that of ‘the single principle of all things’ since it too is described as ‘constituting each thing and making it what it is’. Hence, Truth is the light of the Good (in *Phlb.* §238). The connection that Proclus sees between the function of light in the *Republic*’s analogy of the Sun and the *Philebus* is clear in the following passage from his *Timaeus Commentary*. Commenting on *Timaeus* 29c1–3, Proclus writes:

As for truth, Plato follows the Theologians in assuming that it is found in many places in the realm of Being. (1) One [kind of] truth is that which is uni-form (*benoeidês*), the light that proceeds from the Good, which is also purity, as he calls it in the *Philebus* (55c7, 58c7), and brings unification to the intelligible realm in the *Republic*.

(in *Tim.* I 347.20–4, trans. Runia and Share)<sup>12</sup>

The discussion of Symmetry, Beauty, and Truth in *Platonic Theology* III similarly gives truth an active role in making every constituted thing or every mixture ‘correct’:

Every mixture, if it is correctly made, says Socrates, requires these three things: beauty, truth, and symmetry. If something base (*aischros*) is introduced into the mixture, it does not provide for correctness (*orthotês*), since it is the cause of error (*plêmmeleia*) and of disorderly over-reaching (*pleonexia*). And if truth is at any point separated from the mixture it will not permit it to become composed from things that are pure and ruled by Being, but the whole will instead be infected with the phantom (*eidôlon*) and with not-being.

(*Plat. Theol.* III 43.4–11)<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Runia and Share (2008).

<sup>13</sup> Cf. *Plat. Theol.* III 43.20–2 where Proclus discussed the primary mixture: ‘Symmetry is the cause of the unity of its being (*ben einai to on*), while Truth is the cause of its really being (*ontôs einai*), and Beauty of its being intelligible (*noêton einai*).’

So, for Proclus, truth is not merely a property of representations. It too is a cosmic principle and cause – not merely of representations, but of things.<sup>14</sup> Granted, its causal role is shaped by its role in relation to representational entities like beliefs or statements. It rules out what is merely an image and thus unreal, in a sense, while insuring correctness and purity. The cosmic role of truth is thus not the same as the role of Being, for even images and impure things *are*, in some sense. Thus when Proclus says that the Good transcends truth and transcends being – whether this be *to einai* or *ousia* – there are two distinct, albeit related, cosmic principles under discussion. To translate *alêtheia* as ‘reality’ or ‘being’ would thus elide a distinction that is, to Proclus’ mind at least, real.

Is this merely Neoplatonic madness? If it is madness, it is not simply a Neoplatonic accretion to Plato’s words in the dialogues. There is perhaps some scope to contest this claim in relation to the *Republic*. At the end of the doubly divided line, Socrates instructs Glaucon to construct a proportion among the cognitive states just enumerated: *noêsis*, *dianoia*, *pistis*, and *eikasia* (intellection, discursive thought, belief, and picture-thinking). To the extent that each participates in truth, to that extent it also participates in clarity. This involves at least a differential participation in truth, so that some things are truer than others. Contemporary philosophers are, on the whole, not keen on the idea that truth comes in degrees. So even though we are not yet treating truth as a feature of things other than representational content, we are already some distance from the contemporary truisms about truth. But we should also consider Socrates’ claim in *Philebus* 64b2: ‘That in which there is no admixture of truth can never truly come into being or exist.’ In light of the roles that beauty, truth, and symmetry seem to play in the *Philebus* argument, Proclus is not wrong to suppose that they are cosmic principles.

#### 4. REACHING THE GOOD BY SUBTRACTION (*APHAIRESIS*)

The conclusion and the culmination of Essay 11 is Proclus’ discussion of how it is possible for us to come to understand the Good.<sup>15</sup> As we discussed above, it is first necessary for him to clear away the different senses in which it is *not* possible to know it: it cannot be an object

<sup>14</sup> This is not to say that its cosmological role is completely unconnected to its epistemic one. The truth of representations that are known is an image of the divine truth that transcends discursive thought. The cosmic and epistemic roles of truth seem to converge in the truth of the gods; cf. *Plat. Theol.* I §21, 98.1–9 and Taormina (2000).

<sup>15</sup> The question of whether there is any sense in which the first principle can be grasped is one that recurs throughout Proclus’ writings. For an overview, see van Riel (2017), 75–80.

of knowledge (*epistêton*) in the way that the forms are, but it can in a unique sense be an object of understanding (*gnôston*). Since dialectic depends upon an unhypothetical first principle, such an unhypothetical first principle itself cannot be approached on the basis of such an unhypothetical principle (283.16–284.14). This presents two alternatives: ‘either we shall say that knowledge (*epistêmê*) makes its demonstrations on the basis of an unhypothetical first principle, and [so] there will not be knowledge of the Good, or we shall say that there is indeed understanding (*gnôsis*) of the first principle itself, which is no longer on the basis of a first principle, and we shall seek another knowledge even before dialectic’ (284.14–18).

What remain, as mental instruments by which to approach the Good, are subtraction (*aphairesis*) and refutation (285.15–16). Once being is negated, all else must be subtracted too, all other qualities refuted. This is not, however, simply a means to arrive at the correct verbal formula, but at a real understanding, albeit an understanding which is qualitatively different to that of anything else. What Proclus recommends here is the process which Plotinus had sketched more briefly in the passage discussed earlier: grasping it ‘by taking away (*aphelôn*) being from it’ (III 8.10.33). The problem which Proclus addresses here is an old one, set for all subsequent interpreters by Plato himself, when he proposed a superessential first principle beyond being as the final object of learning. This final object is both the most important and unlike any other.

Solutions of essentially the same kind as Proclus’, that is, proposing a different kind of understanding unique to the Good, had by this point a long history. Numenius of Apamea observed that while we ‘can apprehend bodies by induction from similar things and from the distinctive marks shared by things that are juxtaposed’, one cannot do this in the case of the Good. Rather, he said, we should be like someone sitting on a lookout who ‘with a single glance’ (*mia bolê*) catches sight of a lone ship out to sea. To prepare for this glimpse requires ‘a divine method’ (*theia methodos*) employed by someone who does not care for perceptible things, who studies with enthusiasm, contemplates number, and so perfectly learns this object of learning (*mathêma*).<sup>16</sup> Proclus may discuss the approach to the Good less colourfully than Plotinus or Numenius, but there is a strong resemblance between these earlier thinkers and what he offers in Essay 11. The Good is not a cold abstraction, but was for Proclus ‘hymned’ by Socrates (286.20) and was the highest god to which Plato led us up (287.10–17).

<sup>16</sup> Numenius fr.2 = Eus. *PE* XI 21.7–22.2, trans. in Petty (2012).

*On the Discussion in the Republic  
Demonstrating What the Good Is<sup>17</sup>*

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<I. GENERAL EXEGESIS OF REP. VI 504D2–509E11:  
269.4–272.7>

When Socrates has established as rulers of the best political order those  
who are legitimately lovers of learning and who are not counterfeit phil-  
osophers, and when he has declared them worthy to be spectators of  
the universals – and the affairs which are governed by them will come  
to resemble those universals – he postulates that most of all they will  
understand this very last object of learning. Since his companions have  
asked for a discussion from him as to what this means, and what the  
final one of all the objects of learning hints at,<sup>18</sup> he says that they have  
already heard this many times before, namely that this is the Good,  
which all things desire. And it is not possible to say where one should  
turn one's thinking (*dianoia*),<sup>19</sup> if one should neglect this axiom. He  
announces that he will show what exactly the good is. When he has  
made this announcement, he evidently discusses the good in us, when  
he enquires into whether it should be called pleasure or intelligence  
(*phronêsis*) or neither of these, which Socrates in the *Philebus* (20e1) also  
both enquires into and defines thoroughly. There he demonstrates that  
our good is neither pleasure nor intellect: the former is lacking in in-  
tellect and entirely removed from it, the latter is lacking in pleasure  
and entirely removed from that. But at another time he speaks about  
the form of all good things, which he was accustomed to call the good

<sup>17</sup> We have reserved the capitalised form, the Good, for the Good beyond being, while the two other levels of good which Proclus discusses ('the good in us' and the form of the good) are left in lower case. Festugière similarly distinguishes with a capital letter this highest level of Good from its echoes at lower ontological levels. We have not, however, adopted his further conventions (described in his translation, p. 76 n.1) of quotation marks (*guillemets*) at the level of the forms.

<sup>18</sup> The verb αἰνίσσεται is most frequently used in Proclus of allegorical meaning, where a myth for instance is said to 'riddlingly suggest' a concealed meaning. Here the verb suggests the impossibility of truly speaking about the Good, which can only be approached by language indirectly.

<sup>19</sup> We omit ἐχει, as Kroll suggests, as this appears to be a clumsy emendation by a scribe who did not follow the syntax of the sentence.

itself (*autoagathon*) and which he says ranks alongside justice itself (*auto-dikaion*) and beauty itself (*autokalon*). In the same way also in the *Phaedo* (65d3ff.) he links these three together, when he asks whether Simmias says that there is a form of the just, of the beautiful, and of the good. And in the *Parmenides* (130b) in the same way, Socrates is asked by the leader of the discussion<sup>20</sup> whether he believes that there is a form of each of these in itself, distinct from the many [particulars], and he agrees that there is. At another time again he speaks about some other Good, which is neither in us nor has existence (*ousia*) as a form, nor existence in general, but subsists, as he says, beyond being and existence (*Rep.* 509b9). This is not the same as the good in us, since this Good is said to rule as king in the intelligible place (509d2), nor is it only the good in us, but we ourselves are stationed beneath the intelligible. Nor is [this Good] the same as the form of good things, which is ranked alongside (*systoichos*) the just and the beautiful.

In fact, the forms are of two kinds, some being concerned solely with defining the existences (*hyparxis*) of the objects created by the forms, and others defining the ways that they are brought to perfection. The first kind defines the type (*genos*) of existence (*ousia*) and similarity and difference, and also forms such as animal and horse and man, and every form of existence of that sort and is determinative of types of existence (*hyparxis*) and subjects (*hypokeimenon*). The other kind are forms like those of the good and the beautiful and the just and any forms of virtue, and similarly all of those like the form of health and strength and all such things, and these bring substances (*hypostasis*) to completion. Being (*ousia*) is in charge of all [forms of the first kind], while the good is in charge of the others. For it is necessary that each thing that is participates in existence (*ousia*), as he himself says, and good belongs to everything which preserves something else and works to perfect or to preserve some good (*agathon*), as Socrates also believes (*Rep.* X 608e). Since these two forms are in charge, one over the forms which bring things into being (*hyпаркτικός*), the other over those which bring things to perfection (*τελειωτικός*), it is necessary that one be subordinate to the other. I mean by this that the good which is allotted to a rank corresponding to the forms which bring to perfection is subordinate to the existence (*ousia*) which is the cause of the forms which bring into being, if in fact the good is a being and a particular being. For either the Good is the same as existence (*ousia*) or it is different from existence, which the Eleatic Stranger showed was the *genus* of all that exists (*Soph.* 250a10–11). And if the Good is the same as existence, an absurdity

<sup>20</sup> That is, by Zeno, at this point in the dialogue. The noun *kathêgēmôn* here is more often used by Proclus of Syrianus.

follows, because to exist is not the same as to exist in a good state. If on the other hand it is something different from existence, it is necessary that it participate in existence, because that is the *genus* of all forms. If the *genera* are prior to the forms, it would not be this good which would rule over the intelligibles (509d2), but that class, under which both the good and each form is arranged, namely being, which in fact it is, and which has primacy over the other *genera* of being.

Therefore whenever he says that the Good rules over the intelligibles, when he starts out from the analogy of the Sun, he seems neither to speak about the good in us (precisely because it is within us and not among the intelligibles), nor about the good which is ranked alongside the beautiful and the just (which comes to participate in another and is a particular being, but is not simply being), but in fact, just as we said, Socrates began by enquiring concerning the good in us – for it was in fact this good which gave trouble to those enquiring into it, concerning whether it ought to be called pleasure or intellect (*nous*) or intelligence (*phronêsis*). As he proceeded he thought it worth mentioning that good which exists as a form, separate from the just, and discussed the topic up to a certain point, but did not prophesy<sup>21</sup> beyond the limit of familiar ideas. Finally he said that the Good is the cause of existence (*ousia*) for the objects of knowledge (508e1, 509b6), and is itself beyond existence and being entirely (509b9), and clearly passed beyond even the good as form. Socrates seems to me to have employed in an extraordinary<sup>22</sup> manner the steps (*epanabasmos*)<sup>23</sup> of the discussions concerning the good, since he has taken there to be three goods, and there could not be more than this: one is unparticipated and superessential (*hyperousios*), one essential (*ousiôdês*) and unparticipated, one participated – the good in us is of this last kind [i.e. participated], the good at the level of the forms is essential, and the one which is said to be even beyond existence is superessential. If you wish, you could take one good as a disposition (*hexis*) existing in an underlying subject, another as an existence and a

<sup>21</sup> The participle translated ‘prophesy’ here (ἀπομαντευόμενος) echoes *Rep.* 505d11–506a2, where the whole soul, though not entirely able to understand the Good, pursues it through all its actions because it ‘divines’ or ‘has a prophetic intimation of’ (ἀπομαντευομένη) it. Proclus extends the meaning of this word slightly from ‘apprehend prophetically’ to ‘declare prophetically’.

<sup>22</sup> Or more literally, ‘in a daemonic manner’ (τρόπον τινα ... δαιμόνιον (I 271.21–2)). The Platonic account is once more described in the language of an inspiration beyond the human.

<sup>23</sup> Proclus’ choice of this unusual word recalls Diotima’s speech in *Symposium* 211c, where increasingly abstract types of beauty are the steps on the ladder of ascent to beauty itself. The word appears again in this essay (292.13) in another context of philosophical ascent, as well as in the *Platonic Theology* 4.29.8, in *Eucl.* 21.9, and in *Parm.* 5.988.29.



part of existence, that is as a form, and another neither as a disposition  
nor as a part. However, he may seem to attribute each of these to the  
very first of the goods: one whenever he speaks of a disposition of the  
good (509a5), another whenever he makes the good one of the intelli-  
gibles, discussing the form of the good (505a2) and speaking of it still as  
an intelligible and understandable (*gnôstos*) object (507b10), just as the  
Sun is one of the visible things and part of this cosmos. But the sense  
in which these things are said will become clear a little later, when we  
discuss fully the analogy between that Good and the Sun.

## <II. ANALYSIS OF TERMS: 272.8–276.22>

Now let us firstly take up the terms in which he began to investigate  
the good in us, and after this the one among the forms, then added  
thirdly all those things which he moved on to contemplate concerning  
another Good before this. When he says that the form of the good is  
the greatest object of learning, by which ‘things that are just and so on  
derive their usefulness and helpfulness’ (*Rep.* 505a2–4) and are perfect-  
ed, and that ‘we do not sufficiently know it’ (505a5–6), all these things  
are said in common of the good in us, and the good among the forms,  
and the Good which is supposed to be before all intelligibles. For the  
form of the good is the participated form and the intelligible one, which  
is transcendent, and the Good before the intelligibles, if indeed the  
name of this form may designate the Desirable established before all  
things.<sup>24</sup> So when these things had been said, he introduced the notion  
that some, who are more clever, say that the good is thinking (*phronê-  
sis*), others that it is pleasure (505b5–6). His listener agreed to these  
as familiar points, and asked to know Socrates’ judgement about these  
things. And he showed in summary that the good is neither thinking  
nor pleasure. When those who give this definition are asked whether  
the good is all thinking, for instance thinking of wooden utensils and  
other such things, they do not consider [that sort of thinking] worthy,  
but propose that thinking of the good is good, and so fall into an ab-  
surdity, taking into the definition of the thing that they are seeking that  
very thing itself. And in turn, those who propose that pleasure is the  
good, when they are compelled to agree that there are bad pleasures,  
are brought around to saying that there are some bad [instances] of  
good things. This is impossible. But [Socrates] himself has not yet said

<sup>24</sup> That is, Socrates applies this term (‘the good’) to these three different goods. In the last  
of these cases, the Good beyond being, Proclus feels the extension of the term is bold,  
but he willingly accepts it on Socratic / Platonic authority.



what the good is. This is because what was needed was to raise all the arguments made in the *Philebus* (25bff.), by which he showed that the good was in the mixture of them both. It is known to everyone that this enquiry is made concerning the good in us. Moreover he himself taught us this, when he introduced the point that ‘many would choose to possess things which seem to be just and beautiful’, but things which seem to be good are not sufficient for anyone to possess, but rather they seek the genuinely good. From these points it is clear that he is seeking the good which can be possessed, and not the one transcendent above us. For we would not possess that transcendent good, but the good in us, about which he says that the whole soul has a premonition,<sup>25</sup> and that the soul does everything for the sake of possessing it (505e).

Up to this point then, the discussion has proceeded concerning the good in us, which it calls the good which one can possess and have. After this [level of the] good, he defines the following discussion as greater than what has gone before. When Glaucon prompts him to indicate what the good is in reality, he starts out by asserting, as he himself says (506e), that it is not possible to speak about the simply Good, from which comes also the good in us, but only to say what it seems to him to be. It is not the good in us which he sets out to clarify through the image (*eikôn*),<sup>26</sup> but the simply Good, as he shows when he says (506d8ff.): ‘But, my dear friend, let us give up for now trying to say what exactly the Good is. It appears to me greater than the scope of our present enquiry to arrive at a definition which would seem right to me’ (506d8–e3). From this it may be inferred that even if he does seem to say by means of the image something about the Good and even to lay bare some of the unutterable secrets (*aporrhêta*), he does not entirely reveal the truth about it as a whole. Perhaps this is because of the presence of people like Thrasymachus and Clitophon, since he does not think it right to reveal the most profound mysteries among sophists. For this reason, when he says next that the Good is superessential, and Glaucon says, ‘what extraordinary transcendence’, he rebukes him, showing that he speaks ridiculously. Then, because Glaucon seems to be stepping into the void<sup>27</sup> in relation to the vision of that which is beyond all things, he says that he will willingly leave unsaid many of the opinions that he holds about it, and lay bare only the analogy concerning the

<sup>25</sup> Here the passage concerning the soul’s prophetic apprehension of the good is echoed more directly, including the key word which appeared at I 271.17, on which see our note above.

<sup>26</sup> That is, through the famous image of the Sun.

<sup>27</sup> On the differences between Proclus and Damascius concerning the notion of ‘stepping into the void’ (κενεμβάτεω) see Vlad (2017).

10 Sun. But if his listeners had been suited to<sup>28</sup> such discussions, he would have filled us with many genuinely theological arguments about it [i.e. the Good]. But as it was, just as we were saying, he shifted the enquiry from the good in us (about which those who said that it was thinking or pleasure were also enquiring), to the good itself, since it is not possible  
15 to know a particular good without the simply good.

Beginning from the image (*eikôn*) of the Sun, he urges his listeners to take care that he does not fraudulently repay the account of the child (*tokos*) (507a), calling the Sun ‘child’ but importing the sense of fraudulence from the paying of interest (*tokos*) in money.<sup>29</sup> And he indicates  
20 in this way, for those who are not listening inattentively to things said in a playful way, that teaching through analogy is a risky method. Since there is a fear that we range over topics in some other aspect than the one under which analogy has included it and we corrupt the demonstration with mere sophistry. For example, this would be the case in this  
25 passage if, since Socrates says that the Sun is analogous to the Good, in so far as it is the cause of light as the Good is the cause of truth, someone should suppose in addition that [the comparison implies that] the Sun is not only the cause of light, but is also a cause *qua* thing that undergoes motion, and he should seek to make that a resemblance to the Good. The one doing this no longer preserves the account of the  
275 Sun [as resembling the Good]: it is not in so far as the Sun is a thing subject to causation that it has been taken into the analogy, but only in so far as it is a cause. In fact it would be impossible to choose any object of comparison with the Good which was alike in every respect, because each of the things after it, as they arise, takes on something inferior to the Good: one takes on intellection, being intellect, another motion,  
5 being soul, and another becoming, being body. Therefore among intellects we should take the first intellect as analogous to the Good, only in so far as it is like the Good, not in the aspects in which it differs from it, and similarly among souls and among bodies. For it is necessary that  
10 the thing compared to the Good will possess dissimilarity as well as similarity.<sup>30</sup> Analogies and comparisons of anything are not taken up for their dissimilarity, but just the opposite of this, for their similarity.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>28</sup> More literally ‘if they were similar (προσφερέις) to such discussions’.

<sup>29</sup> This passage relates to an untranslatable word-play in Plato. Socrates claims that he cannot pay off his debt to his listeners (that is, give a full account of the Good), but only pay off the interest (*tokos*) by describing its child (*tokos*), the Sun. In this, Proclus sees a demonstration of the danger of teaching by analogy.

<sup>30</sup> With Festugière we accept the text of I 285.9–10 as sound (εἶναι ... ἔχον) rather than adopting Kroll’s conjecture (ὁμοίον εἶναι).

<sup>31</sup> It is to be stressed that Proclus is here discussing analogies and not *symbola*, the latter of which can function by unlikeness to the realities to which they refer. On this concept

This, therefore, was the precaution that he thought it worthwhile to warn his companions in the discussion about the good to take, and he had done so already at the beginning of the discussions when he invited [them] to make a distinction – namely that intelligible forms are one thing, and perceptible objects another. He reminds them<sup>32</sup> at this point of beauty itself and the good itself, proposing these as forms of the many beautiful [things] and [the many] good things, distinguishing them in this way: ‘We say that [visible objects] are seen, but not understood intellectually (*noeisthai*), but forms (*idea*) are understood intellectually, but are not seen’ (507b). Up to this point it is clear that he is directing us up towards the forms and the universals (*ta katholou*) prior to the many [particulars], at which [higher] level Socrates was accustomed to do his work, defining the beautiful itself and the good itself, ascending from the many good things or beautiful things. If he had not added another Good to these, I would not agree with the friends of Plato in considering that there is another Good than this which is surely the cause of the forms, which is the very first among the forms which bring to perfection existent things, under which are arranged the beautiful and every form of virtue, as we said a little earlier. Since, having taken up the analogy concerning the Sun and vision and light he relates, in an astonishing manner, how all of the forms, since they exist on an intelligible level – beauty itself, good itself, justice itself – and not only these but also the forms of actions, are illuminated by the Good, [and since he tells us that the Good] grants perfection and existence to all the intelligibles, because it is the cause of being (*ousia*) and perfection, and is itself beyond these things, I think it is worth investigating whether he has thought it right never to mention the good at the level of the forms (*eidētikos*), as a certain perfective (*telesiourgos*) form, at the same time as the beautiful, so that he might take all the forms before many [particulars] to be the intelligibles before visible things (507b2). And from there he ascends to the very first cause of universals (*ta bola*), which he surely could not call by any greater name than ‘the Good’. (This is because the Good is the most revered of all things and it is universally believed that all things desire the Good. This thing, which everything desires, is this cause of all things.) On the other hand, as if he were concerned that we might consider some such thing as the first (*to prōton*), for instance the good among the forms which is responsible only for the completion (*teleiōtēs*) of each one, he showed that the first principle (*archē*) was that

see our Introduction to Essay 6 in volume I (164), with further bibliography. On the relationship of *analogia* to *eikōn* see the Introduction to the current essay.

<sup>32</sup> We follow Kroll, who was in turn following the Basel edition of Grynaeus, in deleting the intrusive &.

beyond knowledge (*epistēmē*) and truth (*alêtheia*) (509a3), just as the Sun is beyond vision and light, and going forward a little in his discussion (509b7–8), he demonstrated that the primordial (*prôtourgos*) cause of the intelligibles was in fact superessential (*hyperousios*), as the Sun is above becoming (*genesis*). And so in this way he revealed that the Good is the first cause of the good among the forms and the beautiful as well and the intelligible essences (*ousia*) in general.

<III. ON THE ANALOGY BETWEEN THE GOOD AND  
THE SUN: 276.23–281.7>

So that we might not pass by the teaching conveyed by the analogy, consider the way in which he says that the Sun is analogous to the Good. It is not in some other respect (by which I mean that it is not in so far as it has a body and a physical place, nor in so far as it is moveable), but in relation to one thing only: that it is the cause of light, through which all visible things are actually seen.<sup>33</sup> And in turn such a light is analogous to truth (*alêtheia*), not in so far as it is spatially extended (*diastatos*) or has reflections of every kind, but only in so far as it provides from itself a cause of being seen to visible objects, and a cause of seeing for the things that see, just as truth (*alêtheia*) [provides from itself] the cause of being apprehended intelligibly to the intelligibles, and [the cause of] apprehending intelligibly to the things which do so apprehend. And the things seen are analogous to those understood intelligibly not in so far as they exist in a place and are moved, but only in that they are visible. This is because it is necessary in analogies, as we said, to look to each of the points of similarity in the objects taken up in the discussion itself, but not to points that are dissimilar and outside of the discussion itself of the objects that have been chosen.

When he has chosen these items in this way, he shows clearly that the Good is beyond intellect and knowledge (*epistēmē*), as the Sun is beyond the objects of sense perception and among these in particular beyond those of vision.<sup>34</sup> And therefore because of this assumption, it

<sup>33</sup> With Festugière we translate here the sense that the passage requires, and suspect that the definite article has been transferred from ὁρατά to ὁρώμενα.

<sup>34</sup> Festugière argues that the phrase τῶν αἰσθητῶν here appears to be equivalent to τῶν αἰσθητικῶν, that is, to mean ‘the sense-organs’ or ‘the faculties of perception’ rather than ‘perceptible things’. He argued that what was needed in the context were the faculties of sense perception rather than the objects, as it was these faculties which were analogous to *nous* rather than the objects which these faculties perceived. On this reading the Sun is ‘in particular’ or ‘especially’ (μάλιστα) beyond vision, as it is vision that is the relevant sensory faculty.

is evident that the good in us is not the same as knowledge and intelligence (*phronêsis*), if in fact on the other level the simply Good is not the same as knowledge. And he also demonstrates that [the Good] exists beyond truth (*alêtheia*), as the Sun exists beyond light. It follows from this that the Good is not receptive (*adektos*) of truth: that which is beyond truth cannot exist either on the level of truth (*alêthôs*) nor as any other of all the things in truth, so that if indeed it exists, but it does not exist in truth, it would not be a really existing thing. But this is impossible. For Plato says that which does not genuinely exist is after the genuinely existent (*to ontôs on*). But the Good does not exist on the level of truth (*alêthôs*), because it begets truth (*alêtheia*), and it must be entirely non-receptive of that which it begets. And it is a necessity that everything which exists on the level of truth must participate in truth. 15 20

He showed also a being which is beyond being. For if that which has being, has being on the level of truth (*alêthôs*), but the Good established the truth which is greater than being, just as the light itself<sup>35</sup> is more to be revered than that which is visible through light, the Good is greater than being. And he shows clearly that he took that which exists (*to on*) as analogous to the thing seen by means of the light, when he says: ‘The eyes see weakly, I said, whenever someone turns them not to those things, of which the light of day presents the colours, but whenever the Sun shines on them, they see clearly’ (508c–d). So having distinguished these out of the visible objects (namely colours, light, eyes, Sun), he drew the analogy with intelligible things saying: ‘So also the eye of the soul, with which one reasons (*noeisthai*), whenever someone turns it where being and reality shine, he reasons and understands, but when he turns it towards that which is mixed with darkness, namely that which is becoming and being destroyed, he has only opinion and has weak sight.’ Therefore he has taken being (*to on*) as the analogous term to colour, and truth (*alêtheia*) to light, and the Good to the Sun, as intellect is analogous to the eye. From all this it is clear that being (*to on*) comes after the Good and truth, just as colour comes after light and the Sun. So the Good is beyond being. For it is not one of the things that exist, but he said that being itself shines by means of truth, just as colour does 25 278 5 10

We have taken τὸν αἰσθητὸν in its normal sense and translated accordingly, despite the incongruity. At 280.16–18 Proclus once more speaks of the Sun as the source of visibility to visible things. Moreover at *in Alc.* 122.13–123.5 he states that visible things ‘participate’ in the Sun, suggesting that it in some sense transcends visible objects. The matter is far from clear, and while Festugière’s solution eases a genuine oddity in this passage, it appears to us to elide a difficulty which we can observe here and in the other relevant passages, even if we cannot resolve it.

<sup>35</sup> ‘The light’ (τὸ φῶς) should more accurately be ‘the sun’ (ὁ ἥλιος) as both Festugière and Kroll note.

15 by means of light. Therefore if the Good is beyond being (*to on*), of necessity it would also be beyond existence (*ousia*).<sup>36</sup>

When he has achieved these conclusions through analogy, he adds a still greater point, namely that the Good is the cause of the intelligibles, since it is not only the cause of their being apprehended by intellection, but also of their existence, just as the Sun is not only the cause of visible things being seen, but also of their generation and nurture and growth. And just as the Sun itself is not generation (*genesis*), so the Good is not existence (*ousia*). For he vividly showed these things by following the analogy,<sup>37</sup> as well as that the Good is superessential. From this it is subsequently clear that this Good is not the same as the one among the forms, because this Good is superessential, but that good, since it exists as one of the forms, is referred entirely to the level of existence (*ousia*). For existence is the *genus* of all the forms, and while this [Good] is productive of substance (*ousiopoios*) for existent things, that [good among the forms] is only perfective (*teleiôtikos*) of them. Consider carefully what those things are which are called ‘known’ (*gignôskomenos*), for which he says that the Good is not only the cause of their being known, but also of their existence (509b). So if we should say that he was taking up the things which exist after the intelligible, such as the objects of discursive thought (*ta dianoêta*), it would be absurd. This is because not only is the Good beyond these, but so too are all the intelligibles, just as objects of perception are beyond mere images (*eikasta*). For it is the same relation (*logos*) between the intelligibles and the objects of discursive thought as between objects of perception and mere images.

10 So what yet higher honour shall you say is allotted to the Good, if it belongs also to all of the intelligibles to be causes of the existence of the objects of discursive thought? So if we do not say that the objects of discursive thought are ‘the things understood’ (*ta gignôskomena*) and which receive their existence from the Good, then it remains that he speaks about the intelligibles themselves, the genuinely existent things. He could not at all mean objects of perception, because it is his habit to call these not ‘objects understood’ (*gnôsta*), but objects of opinion (*doxasta*). And these are not different from the objects seen, for which the Sun is cause of generation, and he altogether denies being (*to einai*) to these and existence (*ousia*). Therefore if the Good pre-exists the things which can be understood, and not only some of these, but all of them (which he makes clear when he says ‘and the Good provides to the

<sup>36</sup> With Festugière, we amend Kroll’s punctuation of this sentence, placing the comma after τὰ γὰρ ὄν rather than after ἐξ ἀνάγκης.

<sup>37</sup> On Proclus’ treatment of the possibilities and limitations of *analogia* see the Introduction to this essay.

things which are understood not only that they are understood, but also their existence' (509b)), it is clear beforehand that the Good, being the cause of intelligible existence, would be pre-eminently superessential. And not only is the Good superessential, but so too is truth (*alêtheia*). For he said that this shines down upon all the things which can be understood, just as the light of the Sun does on those which can be seen. And this illumination (*ellampsis*) appears to be from the superessential first principle of the universals (*ta hola*), through which there subsists a certain participation (*metousia*) in that first principle both for the intelligibles and the beings capable of intellection, because that illumination generates the unity of those same things, both in themselves and in relation to one another. For these reasons it is said to grant to the intelligibles that they can be objects of intellection, and to the agents of intellection that they perform intellection. This is because without this giving and a kind of common bond, it would be impossible for these things to be linked together, so that there would arise as a whole the intelligible object (*to noêton*) on the one hand, and the thing that is intellective (*to noêtikon*) on the other. Therefore just as he makes the light to shine on both the objects of vision and the things that see, and he connects them both through similarity (*homoiotês*) (a greater light than that which is within them being added to each),<sup>38</sup> in the same way, because that which understands (*to nooun*) and the subject understood (*to nooumenon*) are unified by truth (*alêtheia*), they arise with a kindred nature to one another. And one is that which understands, the other that which is understood, each coming to be in the form of the Good (*agathoeidês*), and each is fitted to the other.

Therefore, so that we do not speak at excessive length: it is evident from these things that, according to Plato, the Good is beyond the existence of the intelligibles and is genuinely superessential, since he said clearly (509b): 'that does not belong to existence, but is beyond existence and being and more highly honoured than these.' Nonetheless he says that it is still understandable (*gnôstos*), being the cause of understandability for all things that are understandable, and being the final object of learning (*mathêma*). He also says this clearly: that dialectic also leads up to it. And he says that just as the Sun is seen, though it is also the cause of being seen for the things seen, and of seeing for the things that see, so also concerning the form of the good, he thinks it

<sup>38</sup> Perhaps a reference to the *Timaeus*' account of colour vision at 67c–d. *Tim.* 45b–d gives Plato's famous extramission account according to which the weak light flowing from the eyes is strengthened into a stiffened visual ray by the presence of sunlight in the area. Colour vision involves flames flowing from bodies interacting with the visual ray and either contracting or dilating it.



right that the hearer treat it intellectually as an understandable object,  
 20 but one greater than truth (*alêtheia*) and knowledge (*epistêmê*). That it  
 is not an object of opinion (*doxaston*) is easy to see, since he defined as  
 an object of opinion everything which exists in a sense, and in a sense  
 does not exist. And that it is not an object of knowledge (*epistêtos*) is also  
 clear, since if an object of knowledge is understandable from a cause,  
 25 whatever has no cause is not an object of knowledge.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, if in-  
 deed it is above truth, it would not be an understandable thing (*gnôstos*),  
 since the intelligibles are the things which are understandable for the  
 subjects of intellection by means of truth. It is understandable, there-  
 fore, only by a divine impulse (*prosbolê*) greater than intellect, which he  
 himself calls ‘a ray of soul’, which he says that one must ‘cast upwards’  
 (III 540a7),<sup>40</sup> throwing it towards that thing, through the subtraction  
 30 (*aphairesis*) of everything after it. In fact he himself said this clearly, that  
 281 it is necessary to subtract the form of the good from all things,<sup>41</sup> and in  
 this way to cast upwards the ray of the soul, if one is going to see it in  
 itself. So it is clear from these things by means of what kinds of under-  
 standing the Good is not understandable, and how it is understandable  
 5 and is a final object of learning, and what the final learning is, and what  
 is achieved in relation to the vision of the Good by the way of dialectic,  
 which leads the intellect in the soul towards the Good through subtrac-  
 tion [of all else].

<IV. THE GOOD IS NOT AN OBJECT OF KNOWLEDGE  
 (EPISTÊMÊ). THE METHOD OF SUBTRACTION  
 (APHAIREISIS): 281.8–287.17>

10 But since we have made mention of the Sun as a visible object, it would  
 be a good thing firstly to speak about this: namely how it is not be-  
 coming (*genesis*), even if every visible object is an object in becoming  
 (*genêtos*). For if the Sun will be seen both to exist as becoming and be-  
 yond becoming, what prevents the Good, they say, from both being  
 existent and superessential? So perhaps it is timely here to remember

<sup>39</sup> The argument echoes the first refutation (203d) of Socrates’ dream (201e–202c) in the *Theaetetus*. It is a pity that none of the Neoplatonic commentaries on this dialogue has survived. The reasoning that Socrates provides for why ‘the elements’ must remain unknown mirrors the Neoplatonic reasoning on the One or the Good.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. in *Parm.* 997.27 for another quotation of Plato’s phrase ‘ray of the soul’. Here this ray transfers one ‘to the unity that is truer than being’ (εἰς τὴν ἀληθεστέραν τῶν ὄντων ἐνάδα μεθιστάνειν).

<sup>41</sup> Proclus refers to *Rep.* 543b9–c1 and Socrates’ description of what the successful dialectician is able to do: ἀπὸ τῶν ἅλλων πάντων ἀφελῶν τὴν τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἰδέαν.



the distinctions that were made earlier concerning analogy, in which we were saying that it is necessary not to cross over to other characteristics of the things under discussion, but that it was necessary to stick to the characteristics through which the analogy is considered (*theorein*) at the outset. In the present case, whenever, after postulating that the sun is beyond the engendered things illuminated by it, we then speak of it as becoming (*genesis*), we do not yet reckon it to be something which leads (*hêgoumenos*) nor a cause, but something which follows (*hepomenos*).<sup>42</sup> And if we investigate the coming to be of the things which are illuminated by it, we shall find that it is an entirely ungenerated thing. For this alone of all the things in the cosmos is a truly ungenerated body, because it does not take into itself anything, nor does it come to be, nor does it cast off anything from itself.<sup>43</sup> All other things which give out light alternately receive light from it, sometimes one and sometimes another, through the motion around its own point of the solar sphere, which gives out different rays at different times, into the things in the heavens and into those below the moon, and they possess both coming to be, in so far as they are illuminated, and decay. Similarly the moon also receives both wanings and waxings of the light. Therefore as the source of light itself, the sun is entirely ungenerated. And it is on this point that it is likened to the Good, not in so far as it is a body. On this point the Sun is dissimilar to the Good, though the analogy is constructed on the similarity of the terms (*logos*). So let us take away from these points, that Plato has divinely comprehended how there is also an ungenerated thing among the generated, just as there is one without parts among the partial,<sup>44</sup> and so in this way the Sun, as an ungenerated thing, is king over visible objects. In as much as it is a body and in as much as it is moveable, it belongs to the things ruled over, and not the things which rule. For it is led by the circle (*periodos*) of the Same, and its circle has an order second to the rotation (*kuklêsis*) most imbued with wisdom (*phronimôtatos*).<sup>45</sup>

<sup>42</sup> Cf. *in Parm.* 936.6 where the leading versus following distinction is equated with the distinction between πρωτουργόν καὶ δευτερουργόν.

<sup>43</sup> And in this respect the Sun resembles the self-sufficiency of the divine cosmos itself, cf. *Tim.* 33c. This cosmic self-sufficiency (nothing comes in; nothing goes out) Proclus regards as the fifth of the Demiurge's gifts. See Proclus, *in Tim.* II 86.1–92.10.

<sup>44</sup> It seems likely the reference is to the soul which is composed of both divisible and indivisible kinds of Being and remains unified in spite of being split into portions by the Demiurge. Cf. *in Tim.* II 1.4. Like the Sun, the soul is a boundary term, bridging the gap between eternity and becoming by being both generated (in one sense) and ungenerated (in another).

<sup>45</sup> *Tim.* 36c and *Rep.* X 616e.

Moving to the second point,<sup>46</sup> even if we agree to this, namely that the Sun is a generated thing in accordance with some other kind of becoming (*genesis*), it is not thereby true that the Good has existence in a different sense of existence (*ousia*). While there remained some other  
 15 signification for becoming that is fitting for all bodies,<sup>47</sup> but in the case of existence (*ousia*) and being (*to on*) there is no [other signification]. This is because there is only one [signification of being] belonging to all of the intelligibles, which we say both ‘is’ (*einai*) and ‘genuinely is’ (*ontôs einai*). But since the Good is established above these things, what kind of existence (*ousia*) is left for it, in accordance with which it is an existence and not solely superessential? All existence (*ousia*) is of necessity  
 20 being (*on*), but Socrates said that the Good was not beyond existence alone but also beyond being. Therefore one ought not to say that the Good exists, since it is beyond existing, and for the same reason one should not say either that it does not exist, because again, non-being is common to things other [than those that exist], to which non-existence  
 25 properly belongs. So one must say both that it is neither an existent thing nor a non-existent one.

This fact indeed persuaded others to call it ‘not understandable’ (*agnôstos*) and ineffable (*arrhêtos*) and [established] above all being and non-being,<sup>48</sup> but Plato, whenever he spoke of it as understandable (*gnôstos*) and the final object of learning (*mathêma*) and all such things as this,  
 283 did not allow us to remain undecided<sup>49</sup> and so to apprehend how he said

<sup>46</sup> The εἶτα here (282.11), which we have rendered rather fully as ‘Moving to the second point’, builds from the πρῶτον many lines earlier at 281.9. Having established to his satisfaction that there is a sense in which the Sun is generated (*genêtos*) although in another sense it is not, he now proceeds to clarify that this does not imply that the Good has existence (*ousia*) in a sense. He is, in other words, clarifying both the implications and the limitations of the analogy between the Sun and the Good.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. *in Tim.* I 277.10–32. The cosmos is generated (but had no beginning in time) because it is a composite and requires other causes for its existence. This is the sense of becoming that is appropriate to all bodies. Soul, by contrast, is generated according to Proclus because it (everlastingly) has its activities in time.

<sup>48</sup> With Festugière we agree that ἀρρητον (282.26) should not be corrected as Kroll wished, but accept Kroll’s identification of a lacuna and proposal that something like καὶ ὑπεριδρυμένον (‘and established over’) must have been omitted.

<sup>49</sup> Proclus frames the discussion here in terms of the knowable and unknowable, and of the definite and indefinite, which he also employs when speaking not of our knowledge of the intelligibles and ultimately of the Good (as he does here), but of the related problem of how the gods can have knowledge of our own uncertain world of becoming. The problems are related because, as Proclus is at pains to argue in this essay and in Essay 10, the different kinds of relation which we might loosely class as ‘knowledge’ (e.g. opinion of physical reality, knowledge of the forms, and our final learning of the Good) apply at their relevant ontological levels and not at others, so that we cannot, for instance, have true knowledge of the changing, physical world. Conversely, in the

that this was understandable, both the things that exist (*ta onta*) and that which is the cause of their existence. The things that exist are objects of understanding and objects of knowledge in the manner of knowing (*epistêmê*) which he himself defined as the most exact, in accordance with which he has dishonoured the kinds of knowledge from hypothesis and declared that the genuinely existent knowledge is only one.<sup>50</sup> And he speaks in the following way about these matters, expressing his own opinion: while the other forms of apparent knowledge make their first principles (*archê*) hypotheses, only dialectic sets out to the first principle itself<sup>51</sup> and does away with the hypotheses, until it finds the first principle which does not have the nature of a hypothesis, but that which is truly unhypothetical. Such a first principle is the one, into which all of the hypostasis of the knowable comes to an end. Therefore it is clear from these things, that he calls dialectic a ‘capstone’<sup>52</sup> of apparent forms of knowledge and defines this as genuinely knowledge from an unhypothetical first principle, and says that it sets out to investigate all things, how each stands in nature, and whatever each is. 15

Therefore if dialectic also contemplates (*theasthai*) the Good, considering what characteristic it has and how it stands distinct from other things, it considers (*skopein*) it from an unhypothetical first principle, and this would perhaps be a knowledge even of the Good, of whatever it genuinely is or is not. But if this is a first principle of all things, and it is not possible to apprehend a first principle of a first principle, what means will there be to say that there is also some knowledge of this?<sup>53</sup> On the one hand, each object of knowledge is based on an unhypothetical, apprehensible first principle, which is an object of knowledge in a strict sense (*kuriôs*), but the Good, on the other hand, is not based on an unhypothetical, apprehensible first principle, by which fact it does not therefore have a first principle at all. So that if this is the 25

case of divine knowledge, the problem is explaining how a being at the intelligible level can have knowledge of this less real world. As Dodds notes in relation to Proclus’ discussion of this issue at *ET* 124 (266), this problem is as old as Plato’s *Parmenides* itself (134c, ff.). See also *De Providentia* 63–4. In the present passage, Proclus follows what he sees as Plato’s prompting to consider the way in which we might consider the Good knowable, despite the language of unknowability and ineffability which ‘some’ have ascribed to it, and the difficulty of finding a sense in which it could be called knowable within Plato’s own system of epistemological definitions.

<sup>50</sup> *Rep.* 533b1–c5.

<sup>51</sup> Echoing, but rephrasing, Plato’s πορεύεται ἐπ’ αὐτὴν τὴν ἀρχήν (‘it moves towards the first principle itself’ (VII 533c10)), as Festugière notes.

<sup>52</sup> 534e2.

<sup>53</sup> It seems likely that Proclus has in mind the objection of Theophrastus that ‘Plato incorrectly searches for a principle of a principle’ (fr. 159; cf. *in Tim.* II 120.7–22).

limit of knowledge, will the Good be an object of knowledge<sup>54</sup>? It follows from this that the Good is altogether not a being (*on*), because in the clearest possible terms Plato ascribes knowledge (*epistēmē*) to what exists, belief (*pistis*) to what seems in a way to exist and is perceived by the senses, discursive thinking (*dianoia*) to the objects of discursive thinking, and conjecture (*eikasía*) to the objects of conjecture.<sup>55</sup> And he ascribes intellection to the intelligibles and the objects of discursive thought,<sup>56</sup> and opinion to the objects of perception and of conjecture (*eikastikos*). It is not only in this passage, but also in the *Timaeus* (29c2), that he says that what existence is to becoming, truth is to belief, and that he ascribes irrefutable arguments to the things which exist, and probable (*eikotologikos*) arguments to generated objects (*genētos*), on the grounds that knowledge contemplates the things which truly exist. So if that which exists (*to on*) is an object of knowledge, and the Good is not an object of knowledge, therefore the Good is not an existent thing. Which is precisely what Plato himself said, when he said that it is ‘beyond existence and being (*to einaí*)’. Does it seem to you that in these discussions too he said, in a less than obvious way (*aphanōs*), that the Good was superessential, but that the same thing does not turn out, in the passages where he makes definitions concerning true knowledge, which he brings together using the analogy of the Sun, when he reveals that just as the Sun is beyond becoming, the Good is beyond existence?

Between two possibilities then, either we shall say that knowledge (*epistēmē*) shows [its objects] on the basis of an unhypothetical first principle, and [so] there will not be knowledge of the Good, or we shall say that there is indeed understanding (*gnōsis*) of the first principle itself, which is no longer on the basis of a first principle, and we shall seek another knowledge even before dialectic.<sup>57</sup> But if we shall state that dialectic itself knows not only other things, starting out from<sup>58</sup> the unhypothetical first principle, but also the first principle itself, it is clear that one would not know this too on the basis of a first principle, as

<sup>54</sup> Repunctuating with a question mark after τὸ ἀγαθόν in I 283.26, as did Festugière and Abbate.

<sup>55</sup> VII 511d9ff. and VII 533e4ff.

<sup>56</sup> We omit καὶ εἰκαστικοῖς from 284.1, as it plainly does not fit the context and has intruded from the following line. Kroll enclosed it in square brackets and Festugière omitted it without comment.

<sup>57</sup> We delete the εἶναι in 284.18, which Kroll already suspected. As Festugière observes, if we are to read εἶναι here we must add a relative pronoun (ἣν) before ζητήσομεν, and translate, as he does ‘qu’il existe ainsi, même avant la dialectique, une autre science, que nous aurons à chercher’ (vol. 2, 92 n. 3).

<sup>58</sup> As both Kroll and Festugière note, the clearly false μόνην in 284.20 must be the remains of a participle, most like ἀρχομένην (‘beginning’) or ὀρμωμένην (‘starting out’).

one knows other things on the basis of it. The possibility remains that understanding (*gnôsis*) of the first principle derives from the things that come after it, and it is clear either [that this understanding] shows that [the first principle] is none of the things that come after it, or that it makes inferences (*sylogizesthai*) about the first principle using those [subsequent] things as evidence. But if this is so, it will know the first principle of existent things worse than the existent things themselves, because it will know those things from their cause, but that [first principle] from the things after it. This kind of understanding is not true knowledge (*epistêmonikos*), because it seems to Plato that knowledge (*epistêmê*) is understanding (*gnôsis*) bound up with reasoning from the cause, as he defined it in the *Meno* (98a4). So according to this definition the Good is not an object of knowledge, since it is not possible to understand it on the basis of a cause. Even if the Good is understood from the evidence (*tekmêrion*) of things after it, again, this is not an object of knowledge, because a cause is not the same thing as a piece of evidence. But if understanding of the Good is through subtraction (*aphairesis*), only in this way would we agree with Socrates, when he considers it right that we should make a path for ourselves just as in a battle (VII 534c1–2), refuting [positive claims] concerning the Good, thus [showing] that it is not any one among the other things. These words reveal nothing other than the methods of subtraction.

This shows once again that the Good is not an object of knowledge. For the object of knowledge is not understood through knowledge by reference to what it is not, but to what it is. Therefore, not only is the Good beyond knowledge and truth, but it is also beyond the objects of knowledge, and it is not knowledge nor an object of knowledge nor the truth (*alêtheia*) which connects these with one another.<sup>59</sup> Nevertheless, it

<sup>59</sup> οὐ μόνον ἄρα ἐστὶν τῆς ἐπιστήμης καὶ τῆς ἀληθείας τὸ ἀγαθὸν ἐπέκεινα, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῶν ἐπιστητῶν, καὶ οὔτε ἐπιστήμη οὔτε ἐπιστητὸν οὔτε ἢ ταῦτα ἀλλήλοις συνάπτουσα ἀλήθεια. The denial that the good is an *object* of knowledge is expected and reiterates what has been shown above. But the denial that it *is* knowledge or truth made us think that the sentence had shifted subjects in mid-stream – from being about the Good, it became an existence claim: ‘there is neither knowledge [concerning it] nor is it known nor is there truth [about it] which connects the two [sc. the knower and thing known].’ But the Good must be the subject since the same denial that the Good is knowledge is repeated below at line 18. This jarring of modern philosophical sensibilities is not entirely eased by the thought that this remark is directed against those who might say, ‘Knowledge is the good’ or ‘Truth is the good’. For what the person who says either of those things asserts is that ‘knowing things is good for the person who knows’ or ‘having true representations is sufficient for happiness’. In those claims, knowing is something that agents do and truth is a property of the representations that agents have. But Proclus’ denial (in the present context at least) that the Good is knowledge or truth makes knowledge and truth *substantial things* that someone might falsely suppose

is understandable in a different way through subtraction of other things from it and through refutations, which show that it does not subsist as any of those things, just as Plato himself reminded us through the analogy that it is not knowledge nor truth nor existence (*ousia*) and being  
 20 (*on*). And if you wish to use these things as first principles to investigate the points that follow, you would find that [the Good] is neither the same nor different, if it is not Being, nor is it in motion nor at rest, nor does it have any shape or number, nor is it similar nor dissimilar, nor is it equal nor unequal, nor does it participate in time. All of these things Parmenides brought together in the first of his hypotheses (137c, ff.),  
 25 and inferred from them (142a), that therefore there is no knowledge of the One nor opinion, because it is indeed before becoming and existence. And in general, when this [idea of existence] is shaken,<sup>60</sup> the rest follows, for those who are not willing to speak empty words.

Therefore, we do not possess this fact only from the Socratic discussions, namely that the Good is not an object of knowledge, but also how  
 30 it is genuinely understandable by means of unfailing reasoning through refutations and subtractions. And if he had not recognised how laughably Glaucon answered in response to the reference to the superessential through the analogy, you would have heard Socrates extending the discussion about it in similar terms to those which Parmenides applied  
 286 to the One. But as it was, Socrates saw that his listener was not yet prepared to extend his intellect towards these matters, and said that he would pass by many of the things that seemed true to him (509c), and he did pass them by. And this was that after the subtraction of existence  
 5 we must also subtract all else. So that if he adds something, drawing it from the things after the Good, do not be astonished at his words, as

to be one and the same with that which is the cause of all things and source of all value. Neither of these is, in fact, the first principle of all. But that is not because these things are not substances and causes. They just aren't the *ultimate* cause beyond substance and being that the Good is. To fully grasp the way in which Proclus thinks about truth and knowledge, we must be prepared to have our philosophical sensibilities jarred and to endure the fingernails-down-the-chalkboard presupposition that truth is not merely a property of representations and that knowledge is not merely a sub-class of representational states.

<sup>60</sup> The slightly colourful choice of verb here (*saleuō*) is part of Proclus' broader use of terms of 'shaken' and 'unshaken'. On the more typical uses of this kind, see our note in volume I (215–16, n. 151), where we argue for the reading *asaleuton* ('unshaken') of the inevitable punishment which the gods had placed upon the Trojans. In general, Proclus employs this group of words to emphasise the immutability of the divine and cosmic orders. Here, however, the instability or shaking is a desirable one: our naïve assumption that the Good possesses some kind of existence *should* be shaken, and from the dislodgement of that false idea we will continue, if we are consistent (i.e. we are not 'willing to speak empty words') to the further negations which follow.

he was forced to bring to it things familiar to his listeners, because they were not receptive of the unfamiliar ideas. <sup>61</sup> 10

So it is necessary to speak of that neither as a part of existence, since it is before existence, nor as some one among the forms. For the good as form stands in relation to intelligible existence, just as the good in us does to our existence, because that existence produces the other existence below it (*byphistêmi*); that is, the intelligible one produces ours, 15 and that good [in the intelligible] produces the good in us. It follows that the good [in the intelligible] is inferior to the intelligible existence (*ousia*), as the good in us is inferior to our existence, and the good as form is at the level of existence (*ousiôdês*) and is a kind of existence (*ousia*), but the Good *simpliciter* is the cause of all the goods at the level of existence (*ousiôdês*) which bring existence (*ousia*) to perfection. It follows that if the Good, that is the Good which Socrates hymned at this point, 20 is greater than existence and being, it is different from all other form<sup>62</sup> and from the good at the level of existence. And since every part of being is more incomplete than the being of which it is a part, the Good which is truly the Good would not be [one part of the level of existence] because [the Good which is truly the Good] is that for the sake of which all things are. No part is ‘that for the sake of which’ (*hou beneka*), but 25 rather every part is for the sake of something (*beneka tou*). For the part exists for the sake of the whole, as I suppose Plato himself says: ‘A part indeed for the sake of the whole and not a whole for the part’ (*Laws X* 903c8).<sup>63</sup> Therefore if the Good is not for the sake of something, but each part is for the sake of something, the Good would not be part of anything, so that it is not a part of the intelligible cosmos nor of any 30 other. From this argument again it can clearly be seen how common

<sup>61</sup> The idea that we, the readers, must understand the ways in which Socrates tailors his message to his interlocutors is familiar from Hermias’ interpretation of the *Phaedrus*. Hermias was, of course, Proclus’ classmate and the work by Hermias depicts – in part at least – the content of their teacher Syrianus’ lectures on the dialogue. For a discussion of the way in which the Neoplatonists supposed that Socrates relates to his interlocutors, see Roskam (2014), 29–30.

<sup>62</sup> Festugière is right that Proclus should not speak about ‘other form’ here as he is saying precisely that the Good is not a form. In translating ‘il diffère de toute autre sorte d’être’ he gives a more satisfactory meaning, but this is not a normal sense of εἶδος. If the reading is sound, it clearly means that the Good is different from everything else which *is* form (which the Good itself is not), but the compression of the language clouds the meaning.

<sup>63</sup> Proclus thus broadly agrees with Harte’s interpretation of Plato’s mereology: wholes are ‘structures, the identity of whose parts is determined only in the context of the whole they compose’, Harte (2002), 3.



287 conceptions,<sup>64</sup> which say that all things exist for the sake of the Good  
and that all things desire the Good, have a ‘premonition’ (*R.* 505e1)<sup>65</sup>  
of the Good beyond existence. For the good at the level of existence  
(*ousiôdês*) is for the sake of existence (*ousia*), since it both exists and is  
5 investigated for the sake of existence, because it brings it [i.e. existence]  
to its own perfection, so that it is in a state in accordance with its nature  
and its being may not be incomplete.<sup>66</sup>

So only that is truly the Good, from which each hypostasis and each  
perfection is suspended, for the sake of which all things exist, though it  
exists for the sake of nothing. It does not exist belonging to anything, as  
does the good at the level of the forms, nor does it desire anything else,  
10 as the existence of each thing that exists desires the Good, both so that  
it may exist and so that it may be perfected. And therefore this is that  
which rules over all things, both intelligible and perceptible, to which  
Plato also led us up in his *Letters* (II 312e),<sup>67</sup> when he said, ‘Everything  
exists in relation to the king of all and everything exists for its sake, and  
15 that is the cause of all beautiful things’. What he said there in summary,  
he taught in this passage at greater length. But indeed in that passage  
[in the *Letters*] he uttered these things about the first god. Therefore the  
Good is according to Plato the first god.

<sup>64</sup> While the terminology of *koinai ennoai* is Stoic, Proclus and Syrianus use it and relate it – albeit not with utter consistency – to the soul’s innate *logoi*. See Helmig (2013), 270–2.

<sup>65</sup> Cf. the echo of this same word earlier at 271.17 with our note there.

<sup>66</sup> That is, the action of the good which exists at the intelligible level of the forms has a perfective function, making existence at this level perfect rather than bringing the intelligible into being (which is due to the Good above being).

<sup>67</sup> This is the sole reference to the *Letters* in the *Republic Commentary*. Proclus, like the Platonists before him, regarded the Second Letter as genuine (cf. Saffrey and Westerink (1968–97), vol. 2, xx–lix). Nonetheless, he assigns the *Epistles* generally to ‘the third rank’ when it comes to the sources of Plato’s theology; cf. *Plat. Theol.* I 24.23–5. For his exegesis of the three kings of Letter II and the relation of that teaching to the *Republic*, see *Plat. Theol.* II 53.25–54.20.



## Introduction to Essay 12

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### 1. SUBJECT AND CHARACTER OF ESSAY 12

Despite the title of Essay 12 ('On the Cave in the Seventh Book of the *Republic*'), the text which survives deals not only, and in fact not primarily, with the famous image of the Cave, but also with the image which precedes it in the *Republic*, the Divided Line. Due to a lacuna in our essay, of uncertain length but of at least one entire folio, a large part of Proclus' discussion of the Cave is lost to us. Proportionately, therefore, we have more remaining to us of the discussion of the Divided Line. By the nature of the passages which Proclus analyses here, there is some overlap with Essay 11 (in relation to the Good), and Essay 10 (in relation to the ascent through the distinct ontological levels). Essay 12 offers, in fact, an all-embracing overview of Platonic education as Proclus believed it should be, taking us from awareness of sensible particulars to the unique understanding, beyond anything that could normally be called 'knowledge' or 'understanding', of the One.

It is, in our view, a synoptic work. Taking the images of the Cave and the Divided Line as images of the whole of Platonic education, Proclus expounds them as outlines of the progression from knowledge of physical reality to the experience of the Good itself. Essay 12 is aimed at students who would clearly have to possess already a reasonable knowledge of Platonism, but it could serve in part as an overview of the curriculum for those who were at a relatively early stage of their study. Several topics, such as the nature and position of the study of mathematics (293.25–294.4), and the monads in the antechamber of the Good (294.25–296.1), are dealt with in relatively summary form, though we can readily pursue these topics further in other works of Proclus. What Essay 12 does offer is a synopsis, at a relatively brief and digestible length, of where these topics of study and contemplation fall in the overall arc of Platonic *paideia*.

It is noteworthy that there is no reference in the essay to the return of the released prisoner into the Cave for the good of his fellow prisoners (519c–520a). It is unlikely that this is simply due to disinterest in the social responsibility of philosophers; the old view that late-antique Platonists were indifferent to the realities of political life around them has

long and rightly been challenged.<sup>1</sup> It appears to us that this important silence is due to the purpose of Essay 12. As a synoptic and protreptic work, the essay aims to move its readers, through a broad overview of the path to be travelled, to the greatness of the goal of philosophical life as Proclus understood it. It is with ‘hymning’ this final object of understanding that the essay ends, as also did Essay 11 on the Good.

## 2. THE DIVIDED LINE

In part due to the loss of an uncertain amount of Essay 12, we have much more of Proclus’ discussion of the Divided Line than of the Cave. Even were the whole essay extant, however, it is likely that the Line would take up at least as much space as the Cave. The Divided Line is important to Proclus for several reasons: as an overview of the types of object (sensible and intelligible) and the faculties which correspond to them, as an instance of Pythagoreanism in Plato, and for what Proclus (and other late-antique Platonists) believed that it demonstrated about the existence and status of mathematical intermediates. The process of projecting, understanding, and ultimately reabsorbing the mathematical *logoi* is for Proclus a vital part of the soul’s acquisition of self-knowledge and its ascent to the intelligibles themselves. Though many modern commentators on the *Republic* would deny that Plato does argue for mathematical intermediates, positioned between sensible objects and the forms,<sup>2</sup> Proclus did interpret Plato in this way, and was certainly not alone in this regard.

It is clear that much of Proclus’ teaching on the Divided Line was already present in the teaching of Syrianus. In the only surviving sample of Syrianus’ philosophical writing, the *Commentary on Aristotle’s Metaphysics*, Proclus’ teacher has several occasions on which to make use of the Divided Line in his corrections of Aristotle.<sup>3</sup> Most importantly for Syrianus, as later for Proclus, the Divided Line serves as a mathematical image of the procession of reality from the first principle down to matter, and as evidence that their own doctrine of mathematical intermediates was grounded in Plato. As d’Hoine argues, ‘a case can be made

<sup>1</sup> See especially O’Meara (2003). The political engagement of Iamblichus can be observed in his letters, which are conveniently assembled in Dillon and Polleitchner (2009) and in Taormina and Piccione (2011). On the character of these letters see Dillon (2012). The portrait of Proclus himself in Marinus’ biographical account is at pains to make clear that he took what part he could in the political life of Athens.

<sup>2</sup> For overviews and bibliography on the question see Byrd and Byrd (2019), especially 451–2; and up to the early 1960s Brentlinger (1963).

<sup>3</sup> For an overview and analysis see Côté (2003).

that the Divided Line, for Proclus, as for his Neoplatonic predecessors, first and foremost serves to introduce mathematical intermediaries'.<sup>4</sup> Though the table of contents to Iamblichus' *De Communi Mathematica Scientia* refers to the Line as Pythagorean, Proclus is, as Mueller observes, 'completely explicit about its Platonic origin'.<sup>5</sup>

In what survives of Essay 12, Proclus' theory of mathematics is outlined only briefly:

What else then does he demonstrate to those who are listening attentively than this: that the soul possesses rational principles (*logoi*) of the discursive objects (*dianoêta*), which geometry investigates and arithmetic, so that the objects contemplated by these [sciences] are images (*eikôn*), and our discursive reason (*dianoia*), by being trained in these and purifying itself, must project (*proballein*) their rational principles within itself, and contemplate these in itself, not in images but folded together and without parts. It was indeed by unravelling these things that [the discursive intellect] generated such a great multiplicity of theorems.

(293.25–294.4)

Coming as it does immediately after the lacuna, this sounds like it may well be a summary recapping what Proclus had just explained at greater length. We are fortunate, in any case, that this theory of the nature of mathematical learning, its role in the soul's progression towards self-knowledge, and its position in the ascent from the sensible to the intelligible proper, is discussed at much greater length in Proclus' *Commentary on the First Book of Euclid's Elements*.<sup>6</sup> As O'Meara has demonstrated, the projectionist theory of mathematics which Proclus espouses was already in evidence in Syrianus.<sup>7</sup> This theory, in short, is that mathematical concepts are intermediate between intelligible and sensible things. Within our souls we possess *logoi* (rational principles) which are unextended and indivisible. We project (*proballein*) these principles in the imagination (*phantasia*) in order to understand them as geometric objects. Within the imagination, they take on a spatial extension in 'intelligible matter', which does not cause the kind of imperfections and irregularities which inevitably result when geometric objects are represented in physical diagrams. When the *logoi* have been learned and understood in this way they are reabsorbed into the psyche.

<sup>4</sup> d'Hoine (2018), 596.      <sup>5</sup> Mueller (1987), 344.

<sup>6</sup> See the translation by Morrow (1970) and on this text and Proclus' philosophy of mathematics generally: O'Meara (1989), 142–209 and (2017), Cleary (2000), Lernoud (2000) and (2011), Schmitz (2000), Sommaruga (2000), Nikulin (2002) and (2008), Harari (2006), MacIsaac (2014).

<sup>7</sup> O'Meara (1989), 132–4. On Syrianus' mathematical views more broadly see also 119–41. The key text is Syrianus, in *Aristotelis Metaphysica Commentaria* 91, 20, ff.

Beyond its importance for Proclus' theory of mathematical intermediates, the Divided Line serves to outline the philosophical ascent more broadly. The inequality of the parts of the Line, for Proclus, indicates the inequality of status and power between the intelligible and the sensible, with the former constituting the greater and so larger part.<sup>8</sup> As the *Republic* does not make the point entirely clear, there had been a long debate as to which part of the Line was supposed to be the larger. This traditional discussion is exemplified for us in the third of Plutarch's *Platonic Questions*, which is dedicated to precisely this issue, and by the eighth chapter of Iamblichus' *De Communi Mathematica Scientia*. For Proclus, this is not a matter requiring long discussion: the inequality of the Line simply indicates the inevitable inequality of importance between the intelligible and the sensible (298.23–9). In Proclus' exposition of the Line, as also in Syrianus' but not in that of Iamblichus or Plutarch, the Line is explicitly described as an image of the continuity of procession from the One down to matter.<sup>9</sup> In short, Proclus places great emphasis on the fact that the Divided Line is constructed initially as a continuous line, and sees the divisions which give it its name as representing stages of what is in fact a continuous process.

### 3. TWO SUPPORTING DIALOGUES IN ESSAY 12: THE *SOPHIST* AND *PHILEBUS*

In his exposition of the passages in question in Essay Twelve, Proclus draws upon two further favoured dialogues of Plato: the *Sophist* and the *Philebus*. Both of these had a place in the Iamblichean curriculum of texts which Proclus had inherited, and we know that Proclus wrote about each. In the case of the *Sophist*, there is evidence of at least essays on specific topics and problems, if not a full commentary.<sup>10</sup> In addition to the lost commentary on the *Philebus*, some of the contents of which are reflected in the responses of Damascius in his own, extant commentary on the text, Proclus also wrote a monograph (*monobiblos*) on the three monads which this dialogue places 'in the antechamber of the Good' (65a). The monads are also discussed at length in the *Platonic Theology* and to an extent in the *Commentary on the Timaeus*.<sup>11</sup>

In Essay 12, Proclus draws on the *Sophist* in relation to his discussion of reflections and reflective surfaces (289.18–290.27). In this instance, he is commenting on Plato's remarks in the description of the Divided Line which explain 'images' (*eikones*) as shadows, reflections in water,

<sup>8</sup> See d'Hoine (2018), 579.    <sup>9</sup> Côté (2003), 61    <sup>10</sup> See Charles-Saget (1991).

<sup>11</sup> See Combès (1987).

and on surfaces that are ‘dense and smooth and bright’ (509e1–510a3). This leads Proclus, not unreasonably given his commitment to the consistency of Plato’s thought between dialogues, to think of *Sophist* 266b10–c4. There, the Eleatic Stranger similarly outlines the nature of *eidôla* (images/apparitions), specifying that these are ‘images in sleep’, ‘apparitions in daylight hours that are called “spontaneous” (*autophyês*)’, such as shadows ‘when a dark object interrupts the fire’ or when ‘a double light from the objects themselves and from outside meets on bright and smooth surfaces, coming together into one, and produces an impression the reverse of ordinary sight, thus making an image’ (*Sophist* 266b–c). In Theaetetus’ formulation of the Stranger’s position, there is a four-fold division produced by two divisions into two: the thing itself and its image, and human and divine *poiêtikê*. Natural objects are the work of divine *poiêtikê*, and their images in turn could be either produced by humans or by a divine *mêchanê* (that is, they can be shadows or reflections). Human *poiêtikê* can also produce actual objects (e.g. a house) or images of real objects (266d5–8). Proclus imports, in other words, the fuller theory of types of objects and images from the *Sophist*, prompted both by the broad similarity which it has with the passage in question in the *Republic*, and (as we note *ad loc.*), by the reference which Plato makes in this passage to the need for a smooth surface on which reflection can take place.

Much as Proclus’ treatment of mathematical intermediates summarised his longer discussions of the topic elsewhere, his brief remarks in Essay 12 on the three monads which Socrates in the *Philebus* places in ‘the antechamber of the Good’ are explicitly marked as condensed, because his views could be studied at greater length in his monograph on the topic. Though this is lost to us, Proclus also gives a more extended summary of his views in the *Platonic Theology*. The relevant section of the *Philebus Commentary* can to a large extent be reconstructed from Damascius’ *Lectures on the Philebus*, as it is generally clear where Proclus’ arguments end and Damascius’ begin.<sup>12</sup>

For Proclus, the three monads are not only criteria of the good life, but also fundamental to being itself, in their close connection with the transcendent One/Good.<sup>13</sup> The monads appear in the earliest stages of procession from the One, in the mixture produced from the Limit and

<sup>12</sup> See *Plat. Theol.* III 9 38.3–7; III 11, 43.2–44.20; III 13, 48.10–49.2; III 18 62.11–64.12; III 22 79.2–80.27. The monads are also employed in the *Timaeus Commentary* at II 267.11–24; II 269.6–13; II 270.17–24; III 66.13–26; III 69.10–14. In Damascius see *in Phil.* 2.3–4 and 233–49; *De Principiis* I 64.8–13, 64.19–22, 65.21–66.2, 71.1–2, 305.14–306.1. On the lost monograph and Proclus’ understanding and use of the three monads see Combès (1987).

<sup>13</sup> Combès (1987), 178.

the Unlimited. As Proclus states at *Platonic Theology* III 9: ‘The mixed is a monad, because it participates in the One, and it is of a dual nature (*dyoeidês*), in so much as it has come forth from two first principles, and it is a triad, in so much as there must be in the mixed, according to Socrates, beauty, truth, and proportion’ (*Plat. Theol.* III 9 3–7). The monads inform each of the subsequent levels of reality as they unfold. In the ascent of the soul returning to the Good, by implication, they are among the final barriers to be passed.<sup>14</sup>

At *in Philebum* 235, Damascius summarises Proclus’ view of the roles of the three monads:

Proportion, according to the commentator [Proclus], belongs to the elements and appears in their relation to each other; for only when they have become proportionate can they coalesce, and then the whole superimposes itself upon them. Beauty, in his opinion, comes in with form as a whole, being Form of forms. Truth is both in the whole and in the elements, for each is true individually and so is the whole.

(trans. Westerink)<sup>15</sup>

In addition to these roles in the formation of specific objects, Proclus also speaks of the parts played by the monads in shaping the mixture (*to mikton*) itself. ‘The proportionate is for the mixture the cause of the unity of its being, the true is the cause of its genuinely (*ontôs*) being, and the beautiful is the cause of its being intelligible. Consequently that which is primarily being is intelligible and genuinely existent and especially in the likeness of the One (*henoeidesteros*). And intellect is joined to it [i.e. to that which primarily exists] due to its kinship (*oikeiôsis*) with the beautiful, and each thing participates in being because it is being of beings, and that it is highest among the things that exist because it is joined to the Good.’ (*Plat. Theol.* III 11 139.20–140.1). Placed as they are at the highest level of the intelligible and of being, the monads inform the intelligible as a whole. Proclus goes on to quote with approval the conclusion of ‘the divine Iamblichus’ who defined (*aphorizein*) the intelligible by proportion and truth and beauty, ‘and revealed through these the intelligible gods in the Platonic theology’ (III 11.140.1–5).<sup>16</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Combès (1987), 189–90.

<sup>15</sup> Damascius goes on to challenge Proclus’ demarcation of the activities of the monads here, arguing instead that each is active in the elements and in the sum of the elements. See *in Phil.* 237.

<sup>16</sup> Damascius similarly reports that Iamblichus said that the three monads, proceeding from the Good, organised (*kosmein*) the intellect. Which sense of intellect (*nous*) Iamblichus intended, he says, is not clear. Iamblichus also added that ‘in Orphic literature the three monads manifest themselves in the mythical Egg’ (Damascius, *in Phil.* 243).

In Essay 12 it does not suit Proclus' purpose to rehearse again these points about the function and nature of the monads which he discusses in other texts. Here he wishes only to comment briefly upon the monads in the antechamber of the Good as the penultimate stop in the ascent of the soul to the Good itself. The monads, unlike the Good, have being and are intelligible. The Good itself will be found 'in the midst of the three monads', which 'transport us to it, because of their kinship with it' (295.18–24). The fuller details of how the monads reflect the Good (which Proclus here omits) are recorded for us in Damascius, *in Phil.* 238:

The One Principle of all things constitutes each thing and makes it what it is, and therefore its light is Truth (*Rep.* VI 508e–590a); and it reveals itself as desirable to all things, and therefore it is also primal Beauty and the Cause of things beautiful (*Epist.* II 312e); lastly, it determines, for each thing according to its capacity, the measures set by the order of which it is the source and therefore it is glorified as the Measure (*Laws* IV 716c). What the First Cause, then, is in one, the three monads are separately, and thus they express the One Principle.

(trans. Westerink)

For the lovers of contemplation, Proclus recommends the study of this topic in his monograph. In Essay 12, however, he is concerned solely with stating that the monads, by their expression of the Good itself, allow us to apprehend it at one remove, and then, in an ineffable way, to approach and to understand it directly. It is with this prospect of the final, indescribable understanding of the Good that Essay 12 ends. In this, the ending is something of a reprise of Essay 11, which also aimed to take its readers/audience to this elevated point.

# *On the Cave in the Seventh Book of the Republic*

## <1. THE DOUBLY DIVIDED LINE: 287.20–292.21>

20 If it is necessary that we too should speak about the Cave and all the things outside the Cave and their resemblance (*homoiotês*) to reality (*ta pragmata*), let us first discuss how Plato himself divided all things in the cutting up of the Line (*Rep.* VI 509d–511e5).<sup>17</sup> In those [divisions] as well he makes the things inside the Cave represent the objects of opinion (*doxasta*), and makes the things outside the Cave represent the objects of understanding (*gnôsta*). It is for this reason too that, in addition to the division itself, when he has completed it in the sixth book (VI 511d6, ff.), he immediately adapted this image at the very beginning of the seventh (VII 514a1, ff.). In addition to this image (*eikôn*), he once again took up the division previously discussed (VII 533e7, ff.), drawing parallel distinctions between the [kinds of] understanding (*gnôsis*) and the objects to which the [kinds of] understanding apply (VII 534a5, ff.), as he said himself. In between these [passages] he encourages [his listeners] to compare accordingly these things to what he has said before (VII 517a–b), which were the four divisions of all things. So let us run briefly through those things, with which we shall demonstrate that the image as a whole is in agreement (*homologeîn*).

5 So wishing to indicate that the procession of existent things from the One was continuous (*synechês*) and unified (*henômenos*), [Plato] conveyed this continuity (*synecheia*) through the image of a single Line, with the subsequent [segments] proceeding from the prior ones at each stage through likeness (*homoiotês*) and coherence (*allêlouchia*), since no emptiness (*kenon*) separates existent things. This would not be lawful, because the Good produces all things and causes them to revert back upon itself. At any rate it is necessary that the process of becoming

<sup>17</sup> Proclus plainly implies that these passages, the Cave and the Divided Line, have been discussed by others, as we might well expect. Prior to Proclus, the surviving discussions come from Plutarch (*Platonic Questions* 3) and Iamblichus (*On General Mathematics* 32.13, ff.). He does not, however, on this occasion state who these predecessors were, nor does he introduce their arguments in the course of the essay. On the reasons for this and the character of this essay, see our Introduction to it.



(*genesis*) must be assimilated to that which produces it. Therefore, since that [producing it] is one, the process of becoming must of necessity be continuous, because continuity is akin to unity (*to hen*).<sup>18</sup> The likeness of the following divisions of the Line to the initial stages is the cause of this continuity, and we all agree that this likeness is on the side of unity,<sup>19</sup> because likeness is a kind of unity (*henotês*). 15

For these reasons [Plato] takes a single Line and divides it in two, dividing it not into equal parts, but into unequal ones, yet nonetheless into two.<sup>20</sup> Indeed in the *Philebus* (16c9–d4) [Plato] instructed those investigating existent things to investigate the dyad after [they consider] the one – if there is in fact [a dyad], and if not, the number close to the dyad. Therefore the division of all things into unequal parts indicates, in his view, the rank of the things divided, by virtue of the fact that he posits an inequality with respect to what is continuous [i.e. the length of the segments] that is an image of the inequality with respect to existence. He further divides each of these two unequal divisions proportionately (*analagon*) to the [dividing of] the Line in the initial stage – this proportionality vividly showing the decline of secondary existents from primary ones through its sameness (*tautotês*). For proportionality is a sameness of ratio (*logos*) and ‘the most beautiful of bonds’, as we have learned from the *Timaeus* (31c2), and ‘a judgement of Zeus’, as we have heard in the *Laws* (VI 757b7).<sup>21</sup> So just as this cosmos has been crafted (*dêmiourgein*) in accordance with proportion, since all things possess an 20 25 289

<sup>18</sup> The general sketch of procession which Proclus gives here can be supplemented by reference to the *Elements of Theology*, especially the opening sections on unity and multiplicity and on procession and reversion (propositions 1–39). See especially *ET* 28 (‘Every producing cause brings into existence things like to itself before the unlike’) and 29 (‘All procession is accomplished through a likeness (*homoiotês*) of the secondary to the primary’). Continuity (*synecheia*) is important in several senses: between higher and lower principles and also in the cycles of procession and reversion (*ET* 33). On the unified character (*henômenos*) of procession see *ET* 13: ‘Every good tends to unify what participates in it; and all unification is a good; and the Good is identical with the One’ (trans. Dodds).

<sup>19</sup> We borrow the phrasing of ‘on the side of unity’ from the translation of this passage in d’Hoine (2018), 577.

<sup>20</sup> It is difficult, as Festugière notes, to see a motivation for the adverb *homôs*, though it appears to be emphasising the importance of the fact that there are *two* parts over the other issue in this sentence, the equality or inequality of the two halves. Proclus’ insistence on the inequality of the halves responds to a tradition which wanted to see equal divisions (*isa tmêmata*) here rather than unequal (*anisa*) ones. See on this the valuable note by d’Hoine ((2018), 578–9 n.12) and further discussion in the Introduction to this essay.

<sup>21</sup> Proclus’ most sustained exegesis of the proportion as the judgement of Zeus, with the geometric, arithmetic, and harmonic means being correlated with the daughters of Themis, occurs at *in Tim.* II 198.16, ff.

5 indissoluble friendship (*philia*) towards each other, in the same way all things proceed, being bound together through proportion and harmonising (*homologein*) with each other.

When he has demonstrated the four divisions of the one Line, he postulates the first two divisions, which make up the greater part, as constituting the division of the intelligible class (*nooumenon genos*), and the next two, which make up the lesser part, that is, the visible class (*horômenon genos*). This is because it is necessary to attribute  
10 the greater part to the intelligible, because it is more powerful and embraces the other, and the lesser part to the visible. For it [sc. the visible] is included in the former [sc. the intelligible] in a preliminary way (*kat' aitian*).<sup>22</sup> That which is included (*to periechomenon*) is always lesser than that which includes (*to periechon*), whether you should take that inclusion (*periochê*) to be with respect to existence (*ousia*) or to  
15 power (*dynamis*) or to activity (*energeia*), just as is seen too in the case of all things that connect (*synechês*) and that are distinct (*diêirêmena*). So of the two divisions of the Line which are initially unequal, the greater one is the intelligible class, and the lesser on the other hand is the visible.

So following this, he begins from the things that are first relative to us, since they are more familiar,<sup>23</sup> namely from the visible class, and  
20 he says, 'one of the two divisions is made up of images' (*eikones*) (*Rep.* 509e1), and the other of all that of which those images [are likeness-  
es]. And since 'images' can also designate both sculptures and paintings and all things of that kind, he himself further defines what he intends the images to be: shadows (such as result from sources of illumination  
25 among things illuminated) he calls 'images', as well as the reflections (*emphasis*) in water and those in other reflecting surfaces.<sup>24</sup> Moreover

<sup>22</sup> Cf. *ET* 65 where Proclus distinguishes three modes of existence for a thing: *kat' aitian*, *kath' hyparxin* and *kata methexin*. The first is the mode in which secondary things 'pre-exist' (*prohyparchein*) in their sources. The visible realm pre-exists or is implicit in the intelligible one.

<sup>23</sup> Proclus' way of putting the matter suggests that Aristotle's methodological precepts in *Physics* I.1 are, in fact, derivative on Plato's practice in the dialogues.

<sup>24</sup> Proclus connects Plato's text at *Rep.* 509e1–510a3 with *Soph.* 266b10–c4 by virtue of the fact that Plato seems to say more than would be strictly necessary for Glaucon and Adeimantus to grasp his point. It is worth looking closely at the texts. The *Republic* passage tells us something about the various kinds of surfaces that give rise to reflections: λέγω δὲ τὰς εἰκόνας πρῶτον μὲν τὰς σκιάς, ἔπειτα τὰ ἐν τοῖς ὕδασι φαντάσματα καὶ ἐν τοῖς ὅσα πυκνὰ τε καὶ λεῖα καὶ φανὰ συνέστηκεν, καὶ πᾶν τὸ τοιοῦτον. The parenthetical remark on shadows in Proclus (τίνας εἶναι βούλεται τὰς εἰκόνας, καὶ ὡς τὰς ἀπὸ τῶν φωτιζόντων ἀποτελουμένas ἐν φωτιζομένοις, τὰς τε σκιάς φησιν εἰκόνας καλεῖν) presumably connects with the explanation of shadows in the *Sophist* passage (σκιά μὲν ὅταν ἐν τῷ πυρὶ σκότος ἐγγίγνηται). The dark object that is *in* the light is presumably much the same as the

when he defines what qualities are required for these reflecting surfaces, he says that they are density, smoothness, and brightness. They need density, so that the impression (*emphasis*), when it falls upon the pores (*poros*), does not lose the ability to become one unified image (*eidôlon*) 290 from multiple effluences (*aporrhoia*); they need smoothness lest the roughness of the surface, because of its indentations and protrusions, becomes a cause of irregularity for the image which will be produced; and they need brightness, so that the image, although it has an indistinct appearance, can nonetheless be seen. The motes [of dust] appearing 5 in the air, illuminated through the windows, are invisible without light, because they have only a dim solidity (*sustasis*).<sup>25</sup> Therefore we must reason on the basis of these [facts] that impressions (*emphasis*), according to Plato, are realities (*hypostasis*) crafted by a daemonic invention (*mêchanê*) for producing certain apparitions (*eidôlon*),<sup>26</sup> just as he himself teaches in the *Sophist* (266b7). This is because shadows, to 10 which he says that apparitions (*eidôlon*) are related, have a nature of this kind. For they too are images (*eikôn*) of bodies and shapes, and have a very great sympathy (*sympatheia*) with the objects from which they fall out, as demonstrate the [effects] which the arts of magicians are reported 15 to produce in relation to apparitions (*eidôlon*) and shadows. And why do I speak of the powers of those people? Those powers can be exercised even by irrational animals prior to any reason. The hyena, they say, treading on the shadow of a dog that is sitting high up, casts it down

shadows that are produced *amidst* things illuminated as a result of the sources of illumination. The *Sophist* passage continues with an explanation of how images are produced: διπλοῦν δὲ ἥνικ' ἂν φῶς οἰκεῖόν τε καὶ ἀλλότριον περὶ τὰ λαμπρὰ καὶ λεῖα εἰς ἓν συνελθὼν τῆς ἐμπροσθεν εἰωθυίας ὄψεως ἐναντίαν αἴσθησιν παρέχον εἶδος ἀπεργάζηται. This corresponds pretty well with the theory of reflections at *Timaeus* 46a. Though the *Republic* text says nothing about the double illumination theory involved, the mere mention of the smooth (*leios*) surface in both passages seems to be sufficient for Proclus to connect them.

<sup>25</sup> τὰ ἐν τῷ ἀέρι φαινόμενα διὰ τῶν θυρίδων κατα λαμπόμενα εἴσματα. Proclus seems to draw on Aristotle to turn a familiar atomist image on its head. In *De An.* I.2, we find Democritus comparing atoms to dust motes (ἐν τῷ ἀέρι τὰ καλούμενα εἴσματα, ἃ φαίνεται ἐν ταῖς διὰ τῶν θυρίδων ἀκτίσιν). The same image is used by Lucretius (*DRN* II. 112–24) who claims that seeing dust motes floating in sunlit air is a visible image of the underlying reality of invisible atoms moving restlessly through the void. Proclus, by contrast, seems to imply that the solidity of the dust mote (analogous to the atom) is questionable, since it owes its appearance (analogous to existence?) to the Sun which illuminates it.

<sup>26</sup> We follow d'Hoine's suggestion (2018, 585 n. 31) to take the genitive εἰδῶλων τινῶν as an objective one with μηχανῇ rather than qualifying ὑποστάσεις. Both Festugière and Abbate take this phrase instead with ὑποστάσεις.

20 and makes the dog its meal.<sup>27</sup> And when a woman is menstruating, Aristotle says (*Incomm.* 2.459b27), if she looks into a mirror, the mirror and the image (*eidôlon*) appearing in it appear bloody.<sup>28</sup> The images are also realities (*hypostasis*) according to Plato, and I think this is clear from the analogy. For he says that just as the objects of conjecture (*ta eikasta*) are in relation to visible things (*ta horata*), so are discursive objects (*ta dianoêta*) to intelligible objects (*ta noêta*). And these [discursive objects] are apparently both forms and existent things; and the objects of conjecture (*eikaston*), therefore, being apparitions (*eidôlon*) of visible objects have a certain nature and existence (*ousia*) of one kind or another in which they exist.<sup>29</sup>

291 Moreover it is possible for the friends of Plato to know this at greater length. Since representations (*eikaston*) are of this kind, hear next how the other kind, that of visible things, is defined. For [he says that] they are all of that kind ‘of which this [other] is a likeness, the animals around us and plants and all manufactured things’ (*Rep.* 510a5–6). Therefore it is clear from this to those who are able to conceive of it, that everything in the Cave will be analogous to visible things, and each animal and all the implements that those present carry around the prisoners, and each thing planted (*phyteuton*) that grows around those same people – each of these things will be a body and consequently of the visible class (*genos*). For Plato has distinguished, I believe, all things into the manufactured and the natural, [the latter of] which he called

<sup>27</sup> This on its own would be barely comprehensible, but the same curious belief is reported in Aelian’s *On the Nature of Animals* (6.14) on the authority of Aristotle: fr. 369 (*fragmenta zoica*) in V. Rose, *Aristotelis qui ferebantur librorum fragmenta* (Leipzig: Teubner, 1886). The first part of the Aristotelian fragment relates that the hyena is able to send animals to sleep due to a special power in its left paw. When attacking dogs, however, it casts its shadow on the intended victim, thus reducing it to silence. Having silenced the dog, the hyena is able to carry it off and eat it. Aelian, interestingly, likens hyenas to witches (ὥς αἱ φαρμακίδες), much as Proclus introduces his hyenas by analogy with magicians. On the role of these optical effects in Proclus’ understanding of the Divided Line see the Introduction to this essay.

<sup>28</sup> This curious belief is also reported by Olympiodorus, who also combines it with the example of the hyena and the dog’s shadow (*in Alc.* 219). As Abbate observes (2004, 405 n. 22), the authors evidently have a common source.

<sup>29</sup> d’Hoine (2018), 585–6, astutely observes that Proclus takes such pains to establish the reality of the objects of impression (*eikasta*) not for their own sake but because doing so helps him to establish the reality of mathematical intermediaries. As the relationships which the Divided Line represents between sensibles and reflections in the lower part of the Line is analogous to that between forms and mathematical in the upper part of the Line, Proclus’ attempt to maintain a robust sense of *two* distinct sub-divisions in the bottom part of the Line serves to reinforce the necessity for two sub-divisions in the upper part.

‘planted’ (*phyteuton*) (*Rep.* 510a5–6). But the shadows from these and images appearing in the mirrors he referred to in general as images (*eikones*), and allotted them to the portion made up of the fourth division [of the Line].

Moving on to the greater division of the Line, which he surely ascribed to the intelligible class<sup>30</sup> – there is one [segment] that is distinguished in these terms as secondary, and there is another that is naturally prior. The secondary [segment] is the object of discursive reasoning (*dianoêton*).<sup>31</sup> This [object] the soul is forced to investigate, when it seeks [knowledge of the intelligible], by employing the things that have been imitated [from it], that is, the visible objects – of which the objects of likeness (*eikaston*) are imitations and images, just as the [visible objects] are imitated from [the objects of discursive reasoning]. It must employ these images, which are produced by imitation in the division of the lower part [of the Line], and must set out on the basis of hypotheses, employing [the visible objects] as conventionally agreed starting points (*archê*).<sup>32</sup> This is because visible things are imitations of discursive objects (*dianoêma*): a circle which is drawn is clearly [an imitation of] the [circle] in geometry, as is a triangle, and the numbers in visible objects are [imitations] of those contemplated by the arithmetician, and the same relation holds in all other cases. So these visible objects have been imitated earlier by the things after them, I mean, by objects

<sup>30</sup> On this point and the history of the question to which Proclus is responding, see the Introduction to this essay.

<sup>31</sup> Socrates’ own initial explanation of the first division of the intelligible part of the Line leaves his companion baffled. (‘Ἡ τὸ μὲν αὐτοῦ τοῖς τότε μιμηθεῖσιν ὡς εἰκόσιν χρωμένη ψυχὴ ζητεῖν ἀναγκάζεται ἐξ ὑποθέσεων, οὐκ ἐπ’ ἀρχὴν πορευομένη ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ τελευτὴν, τὸ δ’ αὖ ἕτερον – τὸ ἐπ’ ἀρχὴν ἀνυπόθετον – ἐξ ὑποθέσεως ἰούσα καὶ ἄνευ τῶν περὶ ἐκεῖνο εἰκόνων, αὐτοῖς εἶδеси δι’ αὐτῶν τὴν μέθοδον ποιουμένη.) Proclus’ initial explanation of the discursive segment of the Line is word salad of an even higher incoherence – as if he were so excited by the ideas being discussed that he cannot express himself grammatically: τὸ μὲν ὀρίζεται κἀν τούτῳ δεύτερον, τὸ δὲ φύσει πρότερον, διανοητὸν μὲν τὸ δεύτερον (ὃ δὴ τοῖς τότε μιμηθεῖσιν, τοῖς ὁρατοῖς δῆπουθεν, ὧν ἦν τὰ εἰκαστὰ μιμητὰ καὶ εἰκόνες, αὐτὰ δὲ ὑπ’ ἐκείνων μιμηθέντα – τούτοις οὖν τοῖς ἐν τῇ τοῦ ἐλάσσονος τμήματος διαιρέσει μιμηθεῖσιν εἰκόσιν χρώμενον ἐξ ὑποθέσεων τινων ὠρμημένον, καὶ ταύταις ὡς ἀρχαῖς ὁμολογουμέναις τὰ ἐπόμενα ζητοῦσα ἀναγκάζεται σκοπεῖν ἢ ψυχῇ. Some clarity arises with the next sentence in which we learn the significance of the otherwise opaque αὐτὰ δὲ ὑπ’ ἐκείνων μιμηθέντα. The visible objects in the third segment are imitations of the objects of *dianoia* – just as the shadows and reflections are images of the visible objects in the final segment of the visible part.

<sup>32</sup> This sentence echoes the wording of *Rep.* 510b4–9: ἡ τὸ μὲν αὐτοῦ τοῖς τότε μιμηθεῖσιν ὡς εἰκόσιν χρωμένη ψυχὴ ζητεῖν ἀναγκάζεται ἐξ ὑποθέσεων, οὐκ ἐπ’ ἀρχὴν πορευομένη ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ τελευτὴν, τὸ δ’ αὖ ἕτερον – τὸ ἐπ’ ἀρχὴν ἀνυπόθετον – ἐξ ὑποθέσεως ἰούσα καὶ ἄνευ τῶν περὶ ἐκεῖνο εἰκόνων, αὐτοῖς εἶδеси δι’ αὐτῶν τὴν μέθοδον ποιουμένη.

of impression (*eikaston*), but are themselves imitations of the discursive objects.<sup>33</sup> So the discursive object is as I have said. On the other hand the earlier [part of the upper section] is the purely intelligible (*noêton*), which, because it is higher than the discursive objects, intellect examines. And it does not proceed to an end, as if from hypotheses to conclusions (*symperasma*), with the hypotheses posed as indemonstrables, but from first principles (*archê*) to other, higher first principles, until [intellect] runs up to the indemonstrable and unhypothetical (*anhypothêtos*) first principle, not through its being a hypothesis, but through its being the true first principle of everything, beyond which intellection (*noein*) is not at all lawful, because while it is subordinate to nothing, [all] other things are subordinate to it.<sup>34</sup>

The geometric point, even if it is the first principle of all things in geometry, nonetheless depends on the common first principle of all and is founded upon it. So the monad is the first principle of *some* things and is not [the first principle] of all things in the same manner: it is the first principle of numbers and of all things in arithmetic, but it is founded upon the first principle of all things. It is necessary for those ascending to the first principle of all to employ these things as steps (*epanabasmos*).<sup>35</sup> Of what sort of ‘totality’ (*pan*) does he speak then if not of the intelligible (*nooumenon*) totality? For this was one part of the division, that of being in general, just as the other division is the visible class. In the latter class, the ascent is towards the Sun, the king of visible things; in the former class, it is towards the Good, which is the ruler of all intelligible things, to which, as [Plato] has said earlier, [the Good] grants existence (*ousia*), though it is itself even beyond existence and being.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>33</sup> The visible objects have been imitated ‘earlier’ only in the sense that Proclus has discussed them earlier in this passage, as he is ascending in his explanation from the lower to the higher parts of the Divided Line. They are not, of course, ontologically ‘earlier’.

<sup>34</sup> A great deal is implied in Proclus’ choice of verb here, *hypokeimai*. While we have translated ‘subordinate’ (and Festugière and Abbate both reach for cognate terms in French and Italian) the other, perhaps more relevant, sense of *hypokeimai*, especially in its participial forms as here, is ‘predicated’. That is, while nothing can be predicated of the One, it is predicated of all subsequent things, even of matter, of which even being cannot be predicated.

<sup>35</sup> This relatively uncommon word (*epanabasmos*), referring to the various intermediate steps between sense perception and the first principle as ‘steps’ or ‘stairs’, also appears in Diotima’s speech about the ascent through increasingly abstract kinds of beauty in the *Symposium* (211c3). The phrase ‘ascending to the first principle of all’ echoes *Rep.* 511b6–7 (ἐπὶ τὴν τοῦ παντὸς ἀρχὴν ἰών), as Kroll observes.

<sup>36</sup> This paraphrases, of course, Socrates’ description of the Good at *Rep.* 509b6–10, which is discussed much more fully in Essay 11.

## &lt;II. THE CAVE: 292.22–296.15&gt;

So remember these things, because of the likeness of the objects of enquiry, which the image (*eikôn*) of the Cave will attempt to indicate.<sup>37</sup> At the beginning of this comparison, consider what he says in the introduction to the seventh book: ‘form an image of our nature’, that is, of human life itself, not in so much as it is a substance (*ousia*) and has such and such a power (*dynamis*), but [form an image of human nature] ‘when it comes to education and lack of education’.<sup>38</sup> For Plato in the ninth book makes a comparison of our existence (*ousia*) to an animal possessing by lot a mixed nature, [internally] made up from a human being and a lion and some many-headed beast, as well as a [human] exterior, as if it were a covering lying over all.<sup>39</sup> But he shapes the present image in a different way, showing what the uneducated life is like, and the educated one, following the divisions discussed before and their types of understanding (*gnôsis*). He likens the Cave to the whole visible class, separating all things into two, just as he did with the Line, and then ascribing the greater part, namely all that which he brings into likeness with the intelligible, to all of the area outside, and the lesser part, namely all that he brings into likeness with the visible, to all of the area inside the Cave. He describes the Cave itself as made up of the underground chamber (*katageion*) (since he says, ‘consider people in a cavernous, underground dwelling’),<sup>40</sup> with another part placed higher, and into that a way up has been built. At any rate he says that we must contemplate (*noein*) ‘in between the prisoners and the fire an upward way’,<sup>41</sup> and that the fire itself illuminates from above both the object-bearers (*skeuophoros*) and the prisoners, so that the shadows of the prisoners also fall below and the shadows of the objects which those approaching carry. Consequently there is also in the Cave a way up from the more mundane (*chamaizêlos*) life to the more elevated one, and the shadows, either of the prisoners or of the objects, which the prisoners initially consider to be the first principle (*archê*) because of their ignorance, correspond to the first portion of the line ...<sup>42</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Proclus insists upon the comparison, as he believes that the images of the Cave and the Divided Line cohere closely.

<sup>38</sup> Both quotations in this sentence are from *Rep.* 514a1–2.

<sup>39</sup> At 588c7–588e1 Socrates presents this composite image of the underlying psychic nature of human beings, with the human body as an outer ‘covering’ or ‘sheath’ (ἐλῦτρον (588e1)).

<sup>40</sup> *Rep.* 514a2–3. <sup>25</sup> *Rep.* 514b3–4.

<sup>42</sup> At this point at least one folio is missing from the manuscript. See the Introduction to this essay on the possible contents of the missing section. When the text resumes,



... relative to the visible objects, and discursive objects relative to the intelligibles. While all these things [*sc.* sensible objects] were seen<sup>43</sup> first by us as we ascend, [Plato] has added in between these and the truly intelligible something else, introducing it somewhat surreptitiously, and then [the intelligibles] themselves. What else then does he indicate to those who are not listening inattentively than this: that the soul possesses rational principles (*logoi*) of the discursive objects (*dianoêta*), which geometry investigates and arithmetic, so that the objects contemplated by these [sciences] are images (*eikôn*), and our discursive reason (*dianoia*), by being trained in these and purifying itself, must project (294) (*proballein*) their rational principles within itself, and contemplate these in itself, not in images but folded together and without parts. It was indeed by unravelling these things that [the discursive intellect] generated such a great multiplicity of theorems.<sup>44</sup>

5 After this he says that [the released prisoner] sees already the whole of the heavens at night and the stars that are likenesses (*homoiôma*) of intelligible things and the lights in them, by which [light] all of them are

Proclus is discussing the experiences of the released prisoner who is now able to experience the world above, that is, the intelligible.

<sup>43</sup> Kroll proposed emending the plainly nonsensical *θεῶν εἰπόντων* to *φανείσων*, 'appearing'. If this is correct, the feminine participle would imply that *τούτων* must also be feminine, picking up *σκίαι* ('shadows') from the preceding, lost lines. This conjecture was followed by both Festugière (2006) and Abbate (see 1970, 102 n.1 and 2006, 407 n. 42, respectively). There are, however, some problems, as d'Hoine observes. If we follow this reading, the following part of the sentence must mean that Proclus emphasised 'the existence of something intermediate between the shadows outside the Cave and the real things found there', that is, that he places the *logoi* of mathematics in the soul between the shadows and the reflections in water that the liberated prisoner sees. This, to say the least, would be an odd assertion. If we take it, as do Festugière and Abbate, that the mathematical *logoi* are between the shadows in the Cave and the shadows and reflections outside the Cave, a further problem arises in that we are supposed to see 'these things' (whatever they are) first during the ascent, and the shadows in the Cave are seen before we have begun to ascend (d'Hoine (2018), 590 n.49). d'Hoine makes the alternative conjecture *θεαθέντων* ('having been seen' or 'having been contemplated', the aorist passive participle of *θεάομαι*). On this reading 'these things' are now 'the sensible particulars', and it is between these and the intelligibles properly speaking that Proclus places the mathematical. This makes much better sense and is more consistent with Proclus' views elsewhere. As d'Hoine notes himself, the aorist passive of this verb 'is frequent only in late ancient and Byzantine Christian authors' and is not otherwise attested in Proclus, though it does occur 'as early as Philo (*De gigant.* 15.6) and also occurs in Simplicius, *in Cat.* 186.27, and Philoponus, *in De an.*, 455.28'. Though, we would add, it seems a little unusual to use a verb which generally has connotations of intelligible 'seeing' for this ontologically lower 'seeing' of sensible objects, d'Hoine's conjecture is an elegant solution to the problems of an especially knotty passage.

<sup>44</sup> Proclus treats here in summary matters which he develops at much greater length in his *Commentary on Euclid*. See the Introduction to this essay for further discussion.



of a solar nature, so that we may contemplate their own proper essence (*ousia*) and their divine qualities (*theotês*).<sup>45</sup> For just as [the stars] are of a solar nature due to the light from the Sun,<sup>46</sup> so [the intelligibles] are all divine due to the light from the Good. And if it is proper to look at the whole of the heavens before the vision of the Sun and all the things in the heavens and the stars,<sup>47</sup> in the same way one must also look at the entire intelligible order (*diakosmos*) and all the things in it before the Good, so we must conclude from these points as follows: it is therefore necessary that there be some things among the intelligibles analogous to the whole spheres, and others to the stars, which the spheres encompass, and others analogous to the circles themselves. After perceiving these [celestial phenomena] we must establish firmly the orders of the intelligible that are above soul, taking up the wholeness of the spheres as images (*eikôn*) of the gods who are hymned truly as whole, and the circles as images of the gods called at the same time whole and partial, and the stars as images of those properly addressed as partial, and to sub-divide these again as we are led up away from the images.<sup>48</sup> Moreover Plato does know these orders, as we have shown in other places, and the expositions of the theologians are full of these things.<sup>49</sup>

So after the contemplation of these things and the complete habituation through these to the light, he says that it is necessary to see the Sun in the visible realm, just as one must see the form of the Good in the

<sup>45</sup> Plato describes these experiences of the released prisoner at *Rep.* 516a5–b7.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. *in Tim.* III 194.30.

<sup>47</sup> Festugière observes that the sentence does not need both δεῖ and προσήκει. Like him, we have translated without δεῖ.

<sup>48</sup> In Essay 11, Proclus has taken great care to establish what he sees as the possibilities and limitations of analogy. Here, he feels it legitimate to continue the analogy which he sees between celestial objects and the intelligible, to develop a detailed set of correspondences between celestial phenomena and the different orders of gods. The first group, represented by the whole spheres in the heavens, appears to correspond to the leading gods, who are hypercosmic and thus universal – albeit also partial in relation to the Intelligible gods, *PT* VI 12.6–11. The circles correspond to the liberated gods who are both hypercosmic and encosmic (and thus both universal and partial), and stars correspond to the encosmic gods who are allotted specific parts of the cosmos. The further division on which Proclus remarks at the end of the sentence appears to be that within the class of encosmic gods between the celestial (*in Tim.* III 108.10, ff.) and the sub-lunary (*in Tim.* III. 162.1, ff.).

<sup>49</sup> It is impossible to know which text or texts Proclus has in mind when he refers us to his discussion ‘in other places’ (ἐν ἄλλοις). Certainly, a great deal of the *Platonic Theology* is concerned with establishing that theology as Proclus understood it is to be found in Plato if we read the texts correctly. It is also possible that he refers to the lost work *On the Harmony of Orpheus, Pythagoras and Plato with the Oracles*.

‘understandable’ (*gnôstos*).<sup>50</sup> And that he was accustomed to call the intelligible ‘understandable’, is comprehensible through this expression, since when he said that the Good provides existence (*ousia*) to the things known,<sup>51</sup> he was not saying [that it provides it] to the things after the very first existence, but to the highest of existent things.<sup>52</sup> And if this is the case, that it is hymned as even beyond existence and being, it has transcended the most divine existences themselves and is super-substantial (*hyperousios*), in so far as it is beyond intelligible existence. If we had apprehended it sufficiently, it would be clear to us that it is truly with daemonic inspiration that it is said that ‘the form of the Good is the last to be seen among the understandable, and only with difficulty’<sup>53</sup> (for he has added this), because it is possible to be joined with it for those who ascend to the intelligible, from and through the intelligible alone.<sup>54</sup> Therefore within the understandable, the Good is seen by one who lies within its antechamber.<sup>55</sup> The thing which participates in the primary mode (*prôtôs*) in [the Good] is the intelligible, which shows out of itself, for those who are able to see it, what the [light] above the intelligible, which is the cause of the light in the intelligible, is like, if it is lawful to speak this way. Truly the light in it<sup>56</sup> is more divine than that among those who intellectually receive (*noein*) the intelligible, just

<sup>50</sup> Quoting and commenting upon *Rep.* 517b8–c1: ἐν τῷ γνωστῷ τελευταία ἡ τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ ἰδέα. It is because Proclus is echoing closely the wording of the Platonic passage that he refers to the Good here as a form, though if he were speaking more precisely, as he does in Essay 11, he would no doubt clarify that the Good beyond being is not a form, and is to be distinguished from ‘the form of the good’. On the three senses of ‘the good’ which Proclus distinguishes see Essay 11 with our Introduction to it.

<sup>51</sup> *Rep.* 509b610.

<sup>52</sup> The wording is slightly cryptic, but it is likely that Proclus is distinguishing the henads (‘the things after the very first existence’) from the highest of existent things (i.e. the highest of the intelligibles). This is because the henads, like the Good/One itself, are beyond existence. See *ET* 115: ‘Every god is above being (*hyperousios*), above life (*hyperzoos*), and above intelligence (*hypernous*).’

<sup>53</sup> *Rep.* 517b8–9.

<sup>54</sup> Proclus is careful to avoid saying that the Good beyond being can be known, for reasons which he discusses fully in Essay 11. It can, however, be ‘joined with’ or ‘seen’ in a manner unlike anything else.

<sup>55</sup> Proclus refers, as often, to the ‘antechamber’ of the Good from *Philebus* 64c1, ff.

<sup>56</sup> The pronoun αὐτῷ here is, as Festugière remarked, ‘vague’ (104 n.1): does it refer to the intelligible or to the Good? On the face of it, it appears more likely that it should be the intelligible, as it is the light in the intelligible which Proclus goes on to contrast with the less divine light in the (metaphoric, intellective) eye of the beholder (on which, see n. 57 below). The reference below, however, to the visibility of the Good (295.20–1) suggests that it could also be this light which is referred to. This is ultimately, in any case, the same light. As Proclus has discussed above, the intelligible derives its light from the Good, just as the other bodies in the heavens were supposed to derive their light from the Sun.

as the light in the stars [is more divine] than that in the eyes that gaze at the stars.<sup>57</sup> So Socrates in the *Philebus* also said that the Good is hard to apprehend and visible, as he says in this passage, only with difficulty, and that it must be found in the midst of three monads which are arranged in the antechambers [of the Good] and which are intelligible: truth, beauty, symmetry.<sup>58</sup> For these transport us to it, because of their kinship with it. And we explained in the book regarding these three monads how each reveals the Good and what function each provides for intelligible things and how. For it is being (*to on*) that produced these and through them illuminated the whole expanse of the intelligible.<sup>59</sup> Because these topics have been discussed at greater length elsewhere, I do not have leisure to thoroughly revise them in the present discussion, but lovers of contemplation of existent things must take from that [book] our interpretations (*hyponoia*) regarding these [monads].<sup>60</sup>

So in the same way, in this text too, he thinks it right that one sees finally the form of the Good among the understandable, because the understandable, which is in fact the intelligible, is the pedestal<sup>61</sup> of the vision [of the Good]. Therefore it is seen in this, although indeed it is beyond all the intelligible, since [the intelligible] participates in it in the primary manner (*prôtôs*) and shows most vividly of all things what [the Good] is, by participation in which [the intelligible] is solely understandable.<sup>62</sup> [Plato] urges that the person who sees the Good subsequent to seeing all [other intelligible things] must conclude that it is the cause of all that is beautiful and correct. On the one hand, amidst the visible it generates the light and its [cosmic] sovereignty, while on the other hand, amidst the intelligible, it provides truth and intellect, since it is

<sup>57</sup> Proclus here refers to the Platonic extramission theory of vision (*Tim.* 45b2–e1), according to which the eyes emit a kind of light which coalesces with the daylight (or other sources of illumination) to form an ‘eye beam’. When this eye beam contacts objects, it transmits information back to the eye. Vision is thus much like touch – albeit touch exercised with a stick.

<sup>58</sup> *Philebus* 65a1–5.

<sup>59</sup> Proclus’ monograph *On the Three Monads* does not survive. As Westerink (2010, xxi) notes, however, it is also summarised at *Platonic Theology* 150.50–151.35, where it is referred to as a *monobiblos*, that is, a short essay of a book or less, and it may also be the *monobiblos* cited by Damascius (*Dub.* I 57.15–18). Proclus’ *Commentary on the Philebus* is also lost, but something of its contents can be determined from Damascius’ responses to it in his *Lectures on the Philebus*. See further the Introduction to this essay.

<sup>60</sup> That Proclus refers to his opinions on these *monads* as *hyponoiai* suggests that he regards these as interpretations of a hidden meaning. This same word and its cognates are used primarily of extracting allegorical meaning from texts.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. in *Tim.* II 13.9 where earth is similarly said to be a foundation or pedestal for the other elements as things that sit upon it.

<sup>62</sup> In contrast with sensible things which are able to be understood in a way and also not able to be understood.

the sovereign over all.<sup>63</sup> For given that it generated the Sun, and all those things by which the Sun is responsible for becoming, that thing itself is much more a prior cause, and if it is the cause of existence for intelligible things, and also the cause of all things of which those things are causes, it is all the more greatly to be hymned as cause.

15

<sup>63</sup> The text is corrupt at this point, as Kroll already observed. Festugière translates ὡς ἄν κύριον, which is one of Kroll's suggestions in the *apparatus criticus*. Alternatively he also proposed μόνον ὃν. Similarly, Abbate proposes and translates μόνως αὐτὸ ὃν κύριον πάντων ('essendo solamente esso il "Signore di tutte le cose"'). We have translated ὡς ἄν, though without any great confidence that it is correct. The sense in any case is broadly clear: the Good produces the Sun as sovereign of the visible but is itself the sovereign of the intelligible, producing truth and intellect on that level.

## Introduction to Essay 13

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Essay 13 is a wide-ranging commentary on the short speech of the Muses in *Republic* VIII 546a1–547a5 and 547b2–c4. Proclus names this essay after the bee, because bees are sacred to the Muses and display a kind of appropriately ruled society.<sup>1</sup>

Plato has just completed the central books of the *Republic* (V, VI, and VII), in which he has advocated that women should share the philosophical rule with men and has laid out the three famous analogies of the Sun, Divided Line, and Cave. He now embarks on the decline from the government of the ideal city through to four lesser forms: timocracy, oligarchy, democracy, and tyranny. The Muses' speech explains the reasons behind the decline of the ideal city, stating that it occurs because of strife between the auxiliary and guardian classes after these two classes are no longer able to select the correct time for breeding the new generation. Notoriously, the reasons involve a difficult mathematical formula and the understanding of this formula is made yet more difficult by the language through which the Muses relate their explanation.

The Muses are made to tell the audience about two cycles with two numbers. There is one cycle for 'that which is divine and generated' and this cycle is encompassed by the 'Perfect Number'. Then there is

<sup>1</sup> It seems just possible that bees have another connection too – apart from being well-known examples of well-governed social animals who are sacred to the Muses upon whose help Socrates calls to explain the decline of the ideal *polis*. The whole point of knowledge of the nuptial number is to ascertain the opportune moments for conception and birth. The only mention of bees in Proclus outside the context of Essay 13 comes in the *Cratylus Commentary*. There Proclus quotes Orphic fr. 189 ('she devised the illustrious works of the loud-buzzing bees') in his interpretation of Demeter's name. Demeter is responsible not only for life, but for the perfection of life: 'in imitation of this eternal double generation, even mothers who give birth temporally at once both bear their infant and naturally supply the child with milk as nourishment, but do this neither before nor after' (*in Crat.* 92.21–5). Porphyry too connects Demeter with the bees, telling us that her priestesses are called bees (Nymph. 18.6). So we have a creature that is sacred not only to the Muses, but to Demeter, who is herself allegorised in terms of birth and the provision of nourishment in a matter that is *timely*. The relevance of this symbolism of Demeter to Proclus' choice of titles must remain speculative. Perhaps if we were not missing pages at the beginning, we would know more.

another number for human beings.<sup>2</sup> This latter number is described as the total geometric number.<sup>3</sup> The guardians will at some point manage to be ignorant of this number and will not schedule the marriage festivals at the opportune moment with the result that inferior children will be born. This seems likely to be a consequence of the fact that their calculations of the proper time combine reasoning with perception and in spite of their wisdom, the guardians will manage to get this wrong.<sup>4</sup> The children who result from this ill-timed reproductive cycle will be ‘neither gifted nor fortunate’.<sup>5</sup> Though their parents will select the best among them to rule, they will still be unworthy to rule when their time comes and the specific nature of their unworthiness reveals why the Muses in particular have been selected to explain the decline from the ideal city-state. These unworthy guardians will neglect the cultural training or *mousikê* necessary for the role (546d5–6). So it is the Muses who tell us how it comes about that the gifts of the Muses are under-valued and the political consequences that flow from this. Socrates and his companions accept this diagnosis as correct, since it is spoken by the Muses themselves. The subsequent stages of political decline described by Socrates in Books VIII and IX are also ostensibly narrated by the Muses,<sup>6</sup> but Socrates no longer conveys their message in such a high-flown style. The Muses’ poetic obscurity (but perhaps not their authority?) is confined to the immediate causes of political decline: ignorance of the total geometric number that corresponds to the human cycle for the birth of children who are gifted and fortunate.

Proclus’ commentary on these lines follows a winding path. After a brief introduction, marred by a long lacuna, he discusses the general

<sup>2</sup> *Rep.* 546b3–4 ἔστι δὲ θεῖω μὲν γεννητῷ περίοδος ἣν ἀριθμὸς περιλαμβάνει τέλειος, ἀνθρωπείω δὲ ...

<sup>3</sup> *Rep.* 546c6–d1 σύμπας δὲ οὗτος ἀριθμὸς γεω μετρικός, τοιούτου κύριος, ἀμεινόνων τε καὶ χειρόνων γε νέσεων ...

<sup>4</sup> *Rep.* 546a8–b3 καίπερ ὄντες σοφοί, οὓς ἡγεμόνας πόλεως ἐπαιδεύσασθε, οὐδὲν μᾶλλον λογισμῷ μετ’ αἰσθήσεως τεύχονται, ἀλλὰ πάρεσιν αὐτοῦς καὶ γεννήσουσι παῖδας ποτε οὐ δέον.

<sup>5</sup> *Rep.* 546d1–3 ἄς ὅταν ἀγνοήσαντες ὑμῖν οἱ φύλακες συνοικίζωσιν νύμφας νυμφίοις παρὰ καιρόν, οὐκ εὐφρεῖς οὐδ’ εὐτυχεῖς παῖδες ἔσονται.

<sup>6</sup> Note that at 547a4 we get the final Homeric flourish; followed by agreement on the correctness of their account; followed by the observation that this correctness is anchored in the nature of those who testify to it. 547b1 is then an invitation for the Muses to continue to give their authoritative testimony on the forms of political decline – albeit not in the Muses’ previous style of speaking:

Καὶ ὀρθῶς γ’, ἔφη, αὐτὰς ἀποκρίνεσθαι φήσομεν.

Καὶ γάρ, ἦν δ’ ἐγώ, ἀνάγκη Μούσας γε οὔσας.

Τί οὖν, ἦ δ’ ὅς, τὸ μετὰ τοῦτο λέγουσιν αἱ Μοῦσαι:

reason for the collapse of the ideal state. Parallels between the divine governance of the well-ordered cosmos and the human rulers of the ideal *polis* are a recurring feature of Proclus' *Republic Commentary*. So it is unsurprising that he embeds the discussion of change in political orders in the context of natural change. This introductory material is interrupted by a long textual gap and by the time we rejoin the discussion in section 9, Proclus has turned to the specifics of civic decline. As Proclus imagines it, the state's collapse takes place gradually over four generations with the breakdown of the state's educational system following upon the error in calculating the correct times of mating for the guardian class. Training in *mousikê* (arts and philosophy) is lost, and gymnastic education is insufficient to create the necessary *harmony* among the three classes.<sup>7</sup>

Proclus considers the topic of the Muses' speech (the dissolution of the perfect state) so important to the dialogue that he gives the speech its own aim (*skopos*). In effect, the speech of the Muses is a *logos* within the bigger *logos* of the *Republic* – one introducing new speakers with a new purpose and new styles of communication. The style, language, and tone of the Muses' speech, Proclus adds, is appropriately high and sublime. Importantly, this speech employs images because of the things that it deals with, viz. things in the cosmos and human souls (*in Remp.* II 8.11–14). The use of such images is characteristic of the method of teaching from numbers (cf. *in Tim.* I 7.25–30). The problem for the perpetuity of the ideal city lies with the heavenly motions and human inability to make correct calculations, both of which must be taken into consideration in his commentary. But given the speakers who are communicating the nature of this problem, we can expect that the exegesis will be both literal and symbolic. Proclus continues the discussion of this double cause (cosmic forces and human error), making clear how they work in tandem to cause the state's decline.

This cosmic contribution to the downfall of the ideal state, plus the persistent theme of the parallel between the cosmic and civic political

<sup>7</sup> Recall that *harmonia* is simultaneously musical, but also cosmic order and civic harmony. On the art of the Muses or *mousikê*, philosophy, and the 'leader of the Muses' (i.e. Apollo), see *in Remp.* I 57.8–16: 'Therefore, we say that philosophy itself is the "greatest *mousikê*" (*Pbdo* 61a3–4), just as it is the most erotic, if you are willing to say that what is most erotic is that which has harmonised, not the lyre, but [has established] the soul itself in the best harmony – a harmony through which it is able both to introduce order (*kosmein*) to all things human and to celebrate the divine matters perfectly, imitating the Leader of the Muses himself who, on the one hand, celebrates the Father with intellectual songs and, on the other, establishes continuity throughout the whole cosmos by means of insoluble bonds, "moving all things together" as Socrates in fact says in the *Cratylus* (405c).'

orders, explains several sections that might appear tangential to the matter of choosing the right time for the guardians to conceive babies. Section 11 opens with the Neoplatonic alignment between the statesman and the Demiurge. We noted in volume I the division of Plato's political writings in accordance with a doctrine of three Demiurges: Zeus, Dionysus, and Adonis.<sup>8</sup> Since the *Republic* describes a political order aligned with Zeus – the highest of the three Demiurges – and because the Demiurge of the *Timaeus* is identified with Zeus,<sup>9</sup> Proclus feels free to situate the discussion of the cosmic causes of civic decline in the context of the *Timaeus*. It is, after all, the *Timaeus* that tells us more than any other dialogue about the Demiurge. Accordingly, sections 11–15 deal with topics that have strong connections with Plato's cosmogony in the *Timaeus*. Section 12 deals with the question of what is ungenerated and indestructible, as well as with the notion that cosmogony does not occur at a specific time. Section 13 looks at the difference between eternity and time, and posits that infinite time carries on continuously as every star and planet repeat their universal cycles. In section 14 we are told that all living creatures (including plants) have lifecycles that are dependent upon the motions of the heavenly bodies. The heavenly bodies also affect the ease or difficulties of various creatures' conception. Section 15 examines how the cosmos and its revolutions (both of the whole cosmos and of the stars and planets within it) have their own cycles of returns. Thus, human beings, animals, and plants have their own cycles too, dependent on those higher cycles. The Perfect Number encompasses all those cycles and aids the guardians in their determination of the best time for conception.

Beginning in section 16, Proclus considers the Perfect Number, which is the number that determines the cycle of the whole cosmos, including the gods of the stars and planets.<sup>10</sup> This Perfect Number

<sup>8</sup> See volume I, 58 and O'Meara (2003), 95–6.

<sup>9</sup> *In Tim.* I 316.12–16

<sup>10</sup> The *Timaeus* too discusses a 'complete number of time', but here one needs to take care not to suppose that these related dialogues align perfectly. At the end of his discussion of the perfect or complete number of time in the *Timaeus*, Proclus distinguishes the two:

Except that it must be added to what has been said that this Perfect Number [in the *Timaeus*] must be thought to differ from the one mentioned in the *Republic* [VIII 546b3] which 'encompasses the period' for what is divine and generated. The former is more partial [than the one in *Republic*] and is such as to bring about the completion only of the cycles of the eight [heavenly bodies]. The other one, however, is such as to include the individual movements among the fixed [stars] as well as the motions that take place in all of the things in motion in the heavens *simpliciter* – whether they be visible or invisible, whether they belong to the race of gods or to those that come after the gods. It also includes the longer or shorter periods of fertility and infertility in



encompasses them as well as the cycles of the daemons and other superior classes and, of course, human souls as well. Each of the lesser cycles is encompassed by the Perfect Number, which therefore measures all the cycles and their returns to their starting points. As such, the Perfect Number itself is not of the cosmos but above it and hence Intellectual. Just as Eternity is above cosmic time but is its Form or Paradigm, so too the Perfect Number is above the arithmetical numerals that define the times of the cycles of everything in the cosmos. Therefore the 'Perfect Number' is not a number at all but the intellectual predecessor of the number that encompasses all the cycles in the cosmos. In section 17, Proclus turns his attention to the number concerned with human conception (rather than the Perfect Number that involves the whole cosmos). This number can be better (i.e. produces conceptions at the right moment for the birth of worthy guardians in the ideal state) or worse (i.e. produces conceptions that lead to inappropriate guardians). Although this human number has ultimately an Intellectual source, it is also affected by fate. Thus, when the correct harmony (connected to the soul's Circle of the Same) is not achieved, the soul takes on a lesser harmony (somehow related to its Circle of the Different). In regard to this mathematical harmony, Proclus connects the good harmony with the myriad (10,000) and the bad harmony with 10,000 minus 2,500 (the number of justice). This lack of justice in the soul causes the guardian class to be imperfect and leads directly to the decline of the ideal state.

At this point Proclus digresses from his main argument, and from sections 18 to 34 considers how previous philosophers had interpreted Plato on matters that sometimes seem only tangentially related to the Perfect Number. From this hodge-podge of opinions, we learn (among other things) that Sosigenes and Dercyllides equated the nuptial number with the complete return of all the planetary spheres to their original positions in the cosmos (sections 21 and 22) and that Amelius had mistakenly (according to Proclus) included the sub-lunary realm in his calculation (section 29), that solutions derived from Pythagorean number theory involved rational diagonals (sections 26 and 27), and that various mathematical formulae show that births are possible in the seventh and ninth months of pregnancy but not in the eighth (sections 32–4).

Although the topics in these sections may seem in one way unconnected with each other and with the Platonic text, in another way they may also be seen as an introduction to the remainder of the commentary.

the sub-lunary realm. Consequently [this number] also has authority over (*kyrios*) the period of the human race.

(in *Tim.* III 93.22–94.3, trans. Baltzly (2013))

Proclus has spent time considering what other philosophers have thought about topics related to those of the nuptial number. He had already made the point that the number is related to the *synapokatastasis* (or ‘joint return’) of the heavenly bodies to their starting points (or, since the cycles are continuous, a selected point in the ongoing cycle). Thus, Proclus’ discussion of this topic in sections 18–34 is relevant to the nuptial number. The extent to which the number is applicable in the cosmos, specifically whether or not it includes the sub-lunary zone, is crucial for the mathematics behind determining the number. Similarly, what sort of proofs should be offered is a consideration, and Proclus brings in both arithmetical and geometrical proofs here. Even the question of which births are likely to be successful, as those in the eighth month would not be, is an important factor in the computation of number – and number theory plays a role in determining that as well. Thus, although sections 18–34 are a miscellany, they are also a prolegomenon to Proclus’ solution for determining the nuptial number. In a sense, Proclus is looking back over the history of the question, considering related inquiries, and leading his students and readers forward toward his own long discussion on the matter. Like Aristotle, he is laying out the foundation of the problem as it was laid out by previous thinkers.

Proclus returns to his own thoughts about the nuptial number in section 35. He begins by laying out in five lines his synoptic response to the problem of the nuptial number (36.3–7). He will examine the topic under five headings: arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy, and dialectic. His purpose in this elaborate exposition is probably two-fold. First, he wishes to go beyond the limited interpretations of previous thinkers, such as the merely arithmetical and astronomical interpretations of Sosigenes (§21) and the geometrical ones of the Pythagoreans (§23), and of Dercyllides’ school (§24). Second, he wants his five-pronged solution to be seen as more complete than those of his predecessors. Finally, and more speculatively, there may yet be a third purpose. The progression from arithmetic to geometry to astronomy to music and then dialectic mirrors the curriculum laid out for the guardians in *Rep.* VII.<sup>11</sup>

Proclus’ arithmetical explanation (36.7–39.28) has similarities to Sosigenes’ but takes the basic idea further. Proclus introduces squares and square roots, similar and dissimilar numbers, etc., and sets up arithmetical series similar to but more complex than those of Sosigenes. Proclus takes the Pythagorean *epitritos* or ratio of 4:3 as a starting point since this is clearly indicated in Plato’s text at 546c1. But he sees this starting point through the lens of *Timaeus* 31a–32b where Plato establishes the elements of water and air as terms in the physical analogue of

<sup>11</sup> We are grateful to Laura Marongiu for drawing this connection to our attention.

a continuous geometric progression between cubic numbers. Accordingly, Proclus first takes 3 and 4 and squares them. The number 12 forms a geometric mean between 9 ( $=3^2$ ) and 16 ( $=4^2$ ) that preserves the 3:4 ratio through all three terms. He then takes the end points, 3 and 4, and cubes them to yield 27 and 64. Between two cubic numbers, two terms are required to generate a continuous geometric proportion, as we know from Plato's argument for his four-element cosmology in the *Timaeus*. Proclus arrives at the two intermediates that 'bind' the extremes through the same method he explained in the *Timaeus*: take two sides (i.e. factors) from one extreme and one from the other. This yields the sequence  $3^3$ ,  $3 \times 3 \times 4$ ,  $3 \times 4 \times 4$ , and  $4^3$  or 27, 36, 48, and 64. Proclus then adds 27 to 48 to yield 75 and 64 to 36 to yield 100.<sup>12</sup> Both numbers are then multiplied by 100 as per the instructions of the Muses and yield the numbers 7,500 for the first harmony and 10,000 for the second, both of which are encompassed by the Perfect Number. While the latter enjoys the regularity of the square (i.e. it is  $100^2$ ), the other is an 'oblong' number that is  $75 \times 100$ . The differences between the numbers' breadth and depth are allegorised in terms of the human soul. This 'arithmetic' interpretation of 546b3–c7 is the most extended and detailed of Proclus' layered readings. Abstracting from the welter of detail, we may say that it puts the idea of binding through geometric proportion at the centre and thus connects the unity of the ideal city-state with the unity of the visible cosmos in the *Timaeus*. This effectively continues the theme that the cosmos is a political paradigm for the Guardians.

Proclus turns next to his geometrical explanation (40.1–42.10). He again makes use of Pythagorean ideas (especially the 3–4–5 right-triangle) but extends the basic idea over other triangles constructed from them. The geometric reading of Plato's text seems entirely dependent upon the arithmetic one. There are any number of constructions that could be undertaken from the original Pythagorean right-triangle and Proclus' choice seems calculated to arrive at the numbers discovered in the arithmetic interpretation of Plato's text. The geometric exegesis makes no particularly direct reference to specific instructions in 546b3–c7. The closest connection is the starting point of the 3–4–5 right-triangle. If the geometric reading seems like a gratuitous 'reading in' to Plato's words, the harmonic and astronomical exegeses that follow are even more so.

<sup>12</sup> Though other permutations would give different sums, Proclus presumably relies on the fact that Plato treats one of the harmonies as a square. Now of the sums that can be reached by adding two numbers in our geometric progression, only 36 and 64 yield a square: 100 or  $10^2$ .

His musical interpretation (42.11–43.19) builds on the geometrical. It does so by invoking 6 as the area of the 3–4–5 right-triangle and 12 as its perimeter. We already have the *epitritos* or 4:3 ratio associated with the musical fourth in Plato's own text. By invoking 6 as the area of this Proclus discovers the musical fifth (3:2) contained in it in the ratio between 6 and 4. Likewise 6 and 3 yield the 2:1 ratio of the octave. The tone (9:8) requires a bit more massaging of the triangle, which Proclus accomplishes by adding the hypotenuse to each of the sides. He also locates the three proportions in these numbers: the arithmetic (3, 4, 5), geometric (3, 6, 12), and harmonic (3, 4, 6) means. This, in Proclus' eyes, connects the harmonic interpretation of 546b3–c7 firmly to the musical intervals and proportions in the World Soul from the *Timaeus*. This is presumably meant to justify his claim that the life-engendering *logoi* (II 43.11) can be seen in the triangle – a key assumption in his harmonic reading of the nuptial number passage. In any event, the notion that these harmonies are revealed through the correct exegesis of the marriage number again binds *Republic* to *Timaeus* and reinforces the idea that the cosmos is a macrocosm of the ideal *polis*.

His astronomical explanation of the number (43.20–45.16) is also based on the geometrical one, and he associates the numbers of the 3–4–5 right-triangle with the five circles in the sphere of the fixed stars and with the motions of the planets and (finally) with the zodiacal signs.

The dialectical interpretation (45.17–46.17) uses the 3–4–5 right-triangle as a basis for the creation of the cosmos itself. The number 4 (as the square of 2) brings forth the element earth. Plato (*Tim.* 55b) had said that the element was made from isosceles right-triangles and formed a three-dimensional cube. The number 3, Proclus says, makes the other three elements (air, fire, and water). The number 5 when added to 3 and 4 gives us 12, the number of the Platonic dodecahedron, the shape of the whole universe with its 12 sides representing the 12 zodiacal signs (*Tim.* 55c). Proclus carries on to associate 1 with the One, 2 with the Dyad, and 5 with Intellect, which (*qua* Demiurge) creates the stars, planets, and sub-lunary realm. Thus, all five interpretations (arithmetical, geometrical, musical, astronomical, and dialectical) lead the reader to a fuller understanding of the arrangement of the cosmos and the underlying role of numbers in it.

In section 36 Proclus continues his discussion of the 3–4–5 right-triangle, but this time in relation to the human soul. The argument here centres on the soul's double life, one turned toward Intellect and the other toward the realm of becoming. Whereas the circle is the proper symbol for the Intellect, the triangle is appropriate to the soul, for the straight lines in the triangle are characteristic of the soul's

motions. The three sides of the triangle represent the three lives of the soul: intellectual (*noêros*), discursive (*dianoêtikos*), and opinion-like (*doxastikos*). These lines meet each other and form a kind of harmony and unification (*benôsis*), represented by a triangle (unified but made up of separate lines). He touches on the Middle-Platonic notion that different triangles relate to different sorts of souls: equilateral to divine souls, isosceles to daemonic souls, and scalene to human souls. Proclus then emphasises the scalene (human) soul and specifically the scalene 3–4–5 right-triangle (because of its right angle, which indicates the soul's unchanging essence, and its hypotenuse, which represents the soul's ability to return to Intellect). What characterises the human soul in its ascents to and descents from Intellect is that its changing activities exist coordinately with its eternal essence. This difference in sameness, Proclus believes, characterises the 4:3 ratio of the right angle.

Although the stress is more on the human soul than on the nuptial number, the mathematics of the number recurs here, and the myriad (10,000) and the numeral 7,500 again come into play, where the former is related to the Circle of the Same, which leads the soul upwards to the Intellect, and the latter with the Circle of the Different which leads the soul downwards into becoming. There is, as it were, an underlying mathematic and geometric interpretation going on in this section, even though it is now more closely linked to the soul and its own cycle than to the nuptial number and its larger cycle. Proclus is again reminding us of the link between the nuptial number and the human life cycle.

In section 37 Proclus turns to the role of configurations of the heavenly bodies and their role in selecting the correct time for the guardians to conceive. He adopts the principle that occurrences in the macrocosm (the heavenly bodies) affect events in the microcosm (the individual souls of the guardians). The positions of the heavenly bodies can help predict the best times for conception and birth, times that will insure the best guardians will be born. When the abilities of the rulers falter, however, they are unable to choose the right time that the heavenly bodies indicate. Proclus goes into great detail about observing both the fixed stars and the planets and (while doing so) also brings in the use of terminology that he utilised in the mathematical and musical passages in section 35, terminology from the periods of pregnancy in sections 29, 32, and 34, and the terminology of the 3–4–5 right-triangle, which he has been utilising throughout this essay. These reiterations of earlier passages are brought to bear on the choosing of the correct time for the guardians to conceive so that their offspring will be born healthy and capable of carrying on the wisdom of the ruling class. Simultaneously, they show how much of contemporary astrology/astronomy the rulers

must understand and use. Being a good ruler and passing on the ability for others to be good rulers involves a good deal of knowledge, which is essential for the continued existence of the ideal *polis*.

In section 38 Proclus takes up the geometrical/astrological method followed by Nestorius for finding the optimal time for guardians to conceive. In accordance with this method one is to inscribe a right-triangle inside a circle, where the circle represents the zodiac with its 12 constellations. By observing the signs of the zodiac indicated by the placement of the triangle within the circle (determined in part by the date of the child's conception), one can discover the name of the custodian (or zodiacal divinity) for the seven-month or nine-month births. Proclus says that the method will also take into account the position of the stars and of the benefics (planets with good influence) at the time of conception and will weave the letters associated with all of these with the malefics (planets with bad influence) so that one might discover the name of the custodian. The sounds associated with the letters discovered in this process are assembled into patterns that can be used in prayers and hymns to these entities and to the zodiacal sign that rules over the year, the chronocrator (*eniatokratôr*). Equipped with the method of Nestorius, Proclus assures us, the guardians can find the ideal time for the conception of future rulers.

In these two sections (37–8) Proclus introduces concepts from the field of astrology. In antiquity, astrology and astronomy were sister sciences, both useful for the practical and applied end of the study of the heavens.<sup>13</sup> Proclus combines catarchic astrology (the branch of the science that sought the propitious moment for initiating a course of action in order to insure the success of the enterprise) with genethliacal astrology (the study for determining the outcomes [*apotelesmata*] that will result for a person born at a specific time and place under specific stars). Beginning at 56.15, Proclus relates phrases in Plato's dense mathematical instruction at 546b–c to general notions in genethliacal astrology. Some of these map across fairly easily. For example, given that Proclus takes Plato's divine and human numbers to be constructed on the basis of the 3–4–5 right-triangle, he has no difficulty in connecting this to the trine or triangular aspect among the stars and planets that is a central feature of astrology. Similarly, Plato's text speaks of increase and decrease (546b7) or 'waxing and waning', and so Proclus

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Beck (2007), 1–8. This is not to say that the ancients saw no difference between astronomy and astrology. Ptolemy distinguishes them in *Tetr.* I.1, recognising the dependence of astrology upon astronomy and the former's relative fallibility (since it deals with messy facts about the material world), but also emphasising astrology's greater utility.

finds hints of the centrality of the phases of the Moon to the practice of horoscopy. The guardians can use genethliological astrology in order to assign the correct times for the marriage festival, a time that would assure that conception (and later, birth) takes place at an auspicious moment.<sup>14</sup>

Supposing that it was possible for the guardians to have all the necessary information, they could (Proclus believes) practice a form of catarchic horoscopy. That is to say, they could determine the opportune moments for conception in order that the children might be *both conceived and born under optimal celestial conditions*.<sup>15</sup> The impression that the guardians would have complete mastery of every conceivable refinement of astrological technique is further conveyed through Proclus' exhaustive list of what astrologically relevant facts they will pay attention to (56.15–58.16). Not only will they attend to the sub-divisions (*decans*) within the sign that is rising at the moment of conception or birth, as well as those that are at the other cardinal points, and also the positions of the planets – that is, all that is discussed in Ptolemy. They will, in addition, attend to the signs and celestial bodies that 'co-arise' or 'set together' with those signs. This is the science of the *paramatellonta* discussed by Teucer of Babylon. They will also take account of sub-lunary factors, such as the winds.

In short, Proclus throws enough fancy astrological terminology at the audience to portray the successful guardians as masters of *every* form of astrology and meteorology that could possibly be relevant to securing the best children. Finally, the technical, but nonetheless incomplete, presentation of the method of Nestorius serves to connect astrology to the gods (66.1–22). Proclus tells us that he has adapted

<sup>14</sup> Among the techniques for conception astrology was the so-called 'rule of Petosiris' that putatively allowed the practitioner to know the ascendant at the moment of conception from the location of the Moon at the time of birth and *vice versa* – to know the ascendant at the time of birth from the location of the Moon at the time of conception. Proclus gives his audience a very compressed presentation of this rule, together with other techniques for determining the length of a pregnancy (59.3–61.10).

<sup>15</sup> Proclus' embryological theory could aid in understanding the connection between astrology and the child in the womb. Cf. Wilberding (2017), 140–1. Proclus agrees with Porphyry that the rational soul enters the body at birth, but also suggests that the irrational soul (which is traditionally coupled with the rational soul's vehicle) is present prior to that. The souls of the parents do not enter into the makeup of the foetus, but the match between their fine souls and bodies fitting for those souls insures that the parents' bodily influence will construct a suitably similar fine receptacle that will attract a correspondingly fine soul. Presumably there are optimal astrological settings for the various stages of this process, so perhaps the supreme technocrats who oversee the production of guardian children will be able to select for both given an understanding of the length of pregnancy.



Nestorius' method for finding the name of the ruling divinity of the year (*eniautokratoros*) to the time of conception – a method that uses the 'powers of divine and mystical names' (64.9–10). This sacred method, Proclus insists, is what Plato hints at when he says that the marriage festivals will be accompanied by *sacrifices and prayers* (*Rep.* 459e, 461a). So, the guardians' expertise in astrology is continuous with their mastery of the sacred arts.

Proclus therefore interweaves the knowledge of astrology with the reckoning of the nuptial number. Astrology is intimately connected with geometry and arithmetic, as is the nuptial number itself. The amount of knowledge that the guardians must possess is great, but it is (in Proclus' eyes, at least) feasible for them to learn it all. At the same time, the range of that knowledge is an indicator of how the guardians may miscalculate and thereby cause the ideal state to devolve into lower forms of government.

In section 39, leaving the astrological arguments behind, Proclus returns to the topic he addressed in section 36, the relation of the nuptial number to the double life of the soul (its life with the Intellect and in the realm of generation) and the associated ascent to the Intellect and descent into generation. He again cites the 10,000-year cycle of *Phaedrus* 248e5–6, and interpreting this cycle as the number of restoration or ascent to Intellect, he connects this number to the two harmonies of *Republic* 546c2. The second harmony relates to the soul's descent. Returning to a point he had made in section 24, he associates the ascent (and so rationality) with the numeral 100 and the descent (and so irrationality) with the numeral 75. In a striking analogy, Proclus then compares ascent with rising with the Muses and descent with being seduced by Sirens.

In section 40 Proclus takes up the question of what Plato meant when he wrote that the rulers become 'ungifted and unlucky' (*Rep.* 546d2). He explains that the breakdown of their education makes them ungifted, while the unfortunate circumstance of being born at the wrong time under imperfect guardians makes them unlucky. In section 41, he questions why Plato did not require the guardians to be trained specifically in the method of discovering the nuptial number. His response to this question is that the guardians are given the best education, one which empowers them to know how to perform several essential tasks, including celebrating marriages with sacrifices and sacred rites, performing rites of prophecy, and (of course) choosing the correct time for conception to occur.

Section 42 is a comparison of three views – by Orpheus, Hesiod, and Plato – of the three classes – guardians, auxiliaries, and workers – in



the ideal state. Through this complex comparison Proclus clarifies the need for keeping the classes separate – especially the division between guardians and auxiliaries on the one hand and workers on the other – in order to maintain the integrity and existence of the ideal state. Sections 43 and 44 return to the topic of the dissolution of the ideal *polis*, and discover the cause in the intermingling of the three classes, which in turn leads to faction among the ruling classes. The ultimate cause of all these problems is the guardians' inability to choose the correct time for conception, thereby further weakening the gene pool.

In the final section, Proclus sums up the purpose of the speech of the Muses as bringing unity to the cosmos and to us. The very number of the Muses (i.e. 9), Proclus tells us, is a number that implies reversion from the multiplicity of this realm of generation (9) to the unity of the monad (1). Thus the Muses' speech is a *symbolon* of the soul's ascent, leading us from our embodied situation here to the pure bliss of uniting with the One itself. This is, of course, an ascent to the highest knowledge. From the heights, as it were, we look down and see the working of the nuptial number as it pre-exists in the Intellect and throughout the cosmos. The consequent descent allows the guardians to understand the computation and workings of the nuptial number and how to apply it appropriately to maintaining the ideal state. Reading Essay 13, then, is an enactment of a ritual, one which leads us up to knowledge of the number and its role in the cosmos so that we can descend armed with the various branches of knowledge necessary to apply the number to statecraft.

1 *By Proclus the Lycian, Diadochus of the Platonic*  
*School*<sup>16</sup>

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The Bee on the speech of the Muses in the *Republic*

<1. INTRODUCTION: 1.3–4.22>

5 They say that the bee is sacred to the Muses, a teacher for human beings concerning the royal and political life. Therefore, if it pleases you to give the name ‘the bee’ to the summary of the opinions of the ancients concerning the speech of the Muses by Plato<sup>17</sup> and of the exposition of it that I am furnishing, the Muses will not blame you for using  
 10 that name nor will Plato, the mouthpiece of the Muses as I think, who is treating the change of constitutions in this speech that he dedicated to the Muses.

He seems to me to be responding to those who lay claim to political knowledge that the change of constitutions from the higher to the next  
 15 lowest does not come about by necessity. (For the decline would have then also come about from an aristocracy into a tyranny, not only into the others, since the ruling [constitution] would have been compelled by some tyrannical force from without that had risen up against the ruler and had changed the character of the constitution into its linked unlawful form of rule; this is because it is impossible for such an uprising to occur in such a city, since its rulers are so divine<sup>18</sup> and the auxiliary class was brought up with the same<sup>19</sup> education, but some forced

<sup>16</sup> At this point we begin to translate from volume 2 of Kroll’s edition of Proclus’ commentary. Hence the pagination starts again at 1.

<sup>17</sup> Plato, *Rep.* VIII.546a1–547c4.

<sup>18</sup> The text is corrupt. The MSS. have οὕτω θείων, which we have translated here. Wendland had suggested ὁμονοούντων (‘likeminded’) and Kroll would have preferred ὁμοθύμων (‘of similar spirit’) if the term had been more usual in ancient Greek. Whatever term Proclus used, the point would have been that the philosopher-rulers of Plato’s city would have had a shared vision of what the best form of government would be.

<sup>19</sup> Reading (with Festugière) Kroll’s suggestion αὐτήν in place of the MSS reading of αὐτῶν, which would convey the meaning: ‘since the auxiliaries were brought up with their [i.e. the rulers’] education.’

uprising might occur from without.) Rather he seems to me to demonstrate that the decline of human life is as orderly as it can be, arising through intermediate and similar stages because the similarities that proceed in small increments produce a smooth change. Just as in the case of steep ascents the gradient that is drawn up in measured increments aids and eases by its intermediary steps those climbing the entire path from the bottom to the top, so also in the case of steep descents the separate stages that are brought about continuously via the intermediaries<sup>20</sup> of the highest and the lowest provide great ease of transit. Such a conception of change is in accordance with nature, since everything that is destroyed is destroyed by its own evil, as he himself says.<sup>21</sup> For destruction of the whole city would occur from outside, but change could not occur from such a life as that of those who remain citizens, since they would all choose to perish completely rather than to decline into a shameful life. This principle of orderly progression, as I have said, holds true also for the decline. The one with true knowledge (*epistēmôn*) must in every way seek this through a similarity to nature. For, even in natural changes of the elements and of compounds formed from them, some are completely stable both in placidity and continuity (*synecheia*) because of their appropriate intermediaries, but changes that leap over their intermediaries possess a quality that is violent and often opposite to their own nature, such motions as Aristotle correctly said somewhere are not fated.<sup>22</sup> That which creates in accordance with fixed principles does not wish to make irregular jumps, but when it has been forced it shows that the accomplishment of its own functions has been constructed on unsound foundations. But he [Socrates] says that the change from the best constitution will have as its cause the discord<sup>23</sup> among the rulers, not at all among the lower ranks in it. This is because [the city] is an image of the universe, and the rulers are similar to the gods who are the causes of all things, and the auxiliaries to the daemons who are the followers of the gods, who watch over the immoveable order of the cosmos and suppress the disturbance coming from the worse.<sup>24</sup>

. . . of the universe. Thus, if there were discord among the rulers of the best constitution, it would destroy it, but not if it existed among the labouring class, whom the auxiliaries are able to keep in check, just as in the universe daemons check the particular (*merikos*) souls that are

<sup>20</sup> The manuscripts have μετ' αὐτάς ('after them'). Kroll, followed by Festugière, conjectured μέσων ἀεί ('via the intermediaries always'). We suggest simply μέσων.

<sup>21</sup> Plato, *Rep.* X.608e3–609b8. Proclus discusses this principle further in Essay 15.

<sup>22</sup> Aristotle, *Physics* 230a31–b1. We read <μη> καθ' εἰμαρμένην, with Kroll. The point is that changes that unfold unnaturally by omitting intermediary stages are in that regard not according to what is natural or expected to occur.

<sup>23</sup> *Rep.* 545d1–3. <sup>24</sup> Kroll notes a lacuna of 3 1/2 lines in P and of 2 in C.

clamorous and calling out. For we say that the difficulties that the souls have when they come to exist in the realm of generation are solved in no other way than by the gods, through whom is the true path.<sup>25</sup> The difficulties caused by our physical natures, which arise because of the inadequacy of those natures, are resolved by the demiurgic gods; the difficulties that are accustomed to befall priests in the sacred contests themselves are solved by the overseer of theurgy;<sup>26</sup> those that befall the attendants of the divine medical art by the healing (*Paîônios*) gods; those that befall those in charge of a city's harmony and concord by the Muses, as is right. Therefore since he [Plato] blames dissension among the rulers for the destruction of the best constitution of all, and since there is a puzzling question how there is discord among the best [citizens], who especially lead a life most free from faction, who have completed all their education, who from first to last have had all possessions in common (for their ways of life, money, and everything [they held] between them were common among them), because of all this he rightly turns to the Muses seeking 'how first dissension fell upon [them]' (545d8–e1), calling on the goddesses by name in the Homeric fashion, except that he used 'dissension' in place of 'fire', likening dissension to fire.<sup>27</sup> For fire is more capable of penetrating every manufactured instrument and dissolves its divided parts into its primary elements.

Why would he have not asked the Leader of the Muses (*Mousagetês*) to prophesy to him the reason for the discord among the rulers in the best constitution but rather [asked] the Muses? Yet that god would be more appropriate for revealing the future.<sup>28</sup> Surely the Leader of the Muses fills the whole cosmos *qua* single entity with divine harmony,

<sup>25</sup> There is a triple pun here that is impossible to capture in English. The 'difficulties' (ἀπορίαι) have their solution (εὐπορία) from the gods who are the true means (πόρος) for the souls to re-ascend from the realm of generation back to the gods. A fourth form of the word (τὰ ἄτορα = 'difficulties') appears in the next sentence.

<sup>26</sup> The reading of the MSS δημιουργίας ('of demiurgy') is questionable. Kroll conjectured τῆς θεωργίας ('of theurgy'); Festugière prefers τῆς ἱεργουρίας ('of the sacred rite'). The copyist's error (παρὰ δὲ τῶν δημιουργίας ἐφόρων, lines 20–1) was probably influenced by the use of the phrase παρὰ μὲν οὖν τῶν δημιουργικῶν θεῶν in lines 18–19. The change from δημιουργίας to θεωργίας or ἱεργουρίας would therefore be easily possible. We prefer θεωργίας. The 'guardians' are a class of gods that preside over the realm of generation, and that would include theurgical rites. The meaning of ἄθλοις ('contests') is obscure, but possibly it is a reference to sacred rites in which theurgists seek the aid of various gods for an effective outcome of the rite.

<sup>27</sup> Proclus compares *Republic* 545de to Homer, *Il.* 16.113: ὅπως δὲ πρῶτον πῦρ ἔμπεσε νηυσὶν Ἀχαιῶν ('how fire first befell the ships of the Achaeans'). Homer addresses the question, appropriately enough, to the Muses, asking how the Trojans set fire to the Greek ships during the war at Troy.

<sup>28</sup> The Leader of the Muses is Apollo, who is also the god of prophecy.

harmonising it from three main tones: from Intellect as the highest string, from Soul as the median string, and from body as the lowest one. Thus after he has made the universe in truth one single demiurgic lyre from these [three harmonic elements], he alone holds power over it. But the Muses, who are a multiplicity from the Leader of the Muses, proceeding from that monad into a complete number, desire to be a new unity \*\*\*<sup>29</sup>

§9 <Remainder. Errors leading to the decline of the ideal city-state: 4.25–7.7>

\*\*\* of the first things, and of the right time \*\*\* From such couplings are introduced births of children who are ‘neither of the right nature nor of good fortune’ (*Rep.* 546d2). From this it is clear that Plato intends<sup>30</sup> that some such birth results from some such starting point (*katarchê*) of conception, but not only that conception is the beginning of the pregnancy and of the life of the child but also that [the life of the child] is also dependent on [its conception] and has a continuity with it.<sup>31</sup> Therefore the second generation of rulers who will be born are ‘neither of the right nature nor of good fortune’ and because their conception occurs

<sup>29</sup> The manuscripts break off here, and the rest of the introduction is lost. When the text resumes again, line 24 is corrupt. Line 25 places the reader in the midst of a discussion of the decline of the ideal *polis*. Unlike the other essays in the *Republic Commentary*, there is section numbering commencing at 7.10 with §10. Thus the following must be the remainder of section 9.

<sup>30</sup> From here to the end of the paragraph the remaining sentences are in indirect statement with words such as ‘Plato intends’ being understood. We will express the sentences in direct speech.

<sup>31</sup> There is much packed into this sentence, as Festugière (1970), 109 n. 1 sees. To begin, there is the astrological question of which event has more effect on the life of the child, its conception or its birth. Proclus will take up the issues involved in section 33 below. For now, he is setting out the Platonic position that astrologically the time of conception is not only the beginning of the pregnancy but also of what follows after the pregnancy is underway and in the life of the child. (See, with Festugière, the scholiast at II.377.10–12. On external factors influencing the child in utero, including astrological factors, see Wilberding (2017), 84–8.) When the guardians choose the correct time of conception, they are choosing the course of the child’s life. The term that Proclus uses for this starting point (καταρχή) has astrological significance as well, as Festugière also points out. This καταρχή is the καιρός, the critical moment that determines all that follows. Just as an ancient Greek traveller who was about to embark on a journey would consult an astrologer to discover when the stars would be aligned properly for a successful trip, so too the guardians would consult the heavens (and the mathematics and geometry that underlies its motions) for the much more crucial moment for conception. Thus, the determination of the nuptial number (the number that forecasts when this crucial moment will be) is a critically important ability of the guardian class.

at the wrong time they will first neglect the Muses and will pursue an education that is no longer complete. But even if they themselves had been led through the art of the Muses under the supervision of the first rulers, since they applied themselves to it carelessly they will no longer educate those after themselves in a similar way but through gymnastic training alone. The middle generation<sup>32</sup> will think that it is necessary to cultivate this [musical] art for the sake of preserving [the state]. Because of the unfitness of their souls, the second generation will overlook the art of the Muses in the education of those who will be the third rulers, the second generation being ‘neither of the right nature nor of good fortune’ because they were conceived at the wrong time. They are not ‘of the right nature’ because they do not appropriately partake of the whole of education, and they are not ‘of good fortune’ because they were organised in such a cycle that introduces a beginning of the dissolution for the best constitution.<sup>33</sup> For fortune (*tuchê*) completes what is allotted to us from the universe, arranging together what is deservedly ours with such cycles of the universe, whether they are better or worse. And so the second generation educates the generation after them no longer with the whole of education, as has been said, but through gymnastic training alone, as much as is necessary for our existence.

Since the third generation lacks musical training, they necessarily will lack the training to judge thereafter the different kinds of life<sup>34</sup> that are appropriate or inappropriate for guardians, and they will combine the dissimilar kinds with one another. Because the political classes were commingled, the fourth generation of rulers will be factious from the beginning, with each of the classes persisting in the

<sup>32</sup> That is, the second generation. The third generation of leaders will be introduced in the next sentence.

<sup>33</sup> Proclus is alluding to *Rep.* VIII 546a1–7, where Plato introduces the dissolution (λύσις, a3) of the perfect state, ‘such a political constitution (σύστασις) will not remain for all time but is dissolved (λυθήσεται)’ (546a2–3). Its dissolution is part of a natural process. For all things there are periods of growth and barrenness (φορά καὶ ἀφορία, a5), ‘whenever their turnings join together the revolutions of their cycles’ (ὅταν περιτροπαὶ ἐκάστοις κύκλων περιφοράς συνάπτωσι, a6). Thus, as for animals and plants, there is a natural cycle for states as well. The guardians that Proclus is now discussing have the misfortune to be alive at the beginning of the downward cycle.

<sup>34</sup> τὰ διαφέροντα εἶδη τῆς ζωῆς (2.5.26–7): These ‘kinds’ are the kinds of qualities in the soul that make one good or bad at ruling. In the following lines (συνάψειν τὰ ἀνόμοια ἀλλήλοις, 2.5.27–8), we find that this third generation of leaders, who are not ‘musical’ (i.e. not versed in music, the arts, and literature, all of which are the domain of the Muses), misidentify these soul qualities and so mix up the good and bad in the next generation. This error further leads to an unwise redistribution of men and women to higher or lower classes within the state (συγχεθέντων δὲ τῶν πολιτικῶν γενῶν, 2.5.28), which in turn leads to political unrest.

struggle to be primary, due to the commingling. For each class among those that had been commingled wishes to rise above its own level. The class that is worse by nature no longer thinks the same [as before] because of the mixture [of the classes] in procreation (*genesis*), and the one that seems to be better is not able to show that it alone is better because it has received [a trace of] the worse in its nature.<sup>35</sup> Thus it is the rulers of the fourth generation who are factious, whereas those of the first are not.

We have solved the problem of how, although the constitution will be destroyed when the ruling faction is factious, wise rulers will not have this fault. For faction does not exist among them but among those furthest removed from them [in the sequence], who although they rule with the same form of government do not share the same education with those who are truly rulers. The cause of the faction among this final group of rulers is the lack of musical training of the third group, which produced children inappropriate for being guardians because of the haphazard commingling of dissimilar psychic qualities.<sup>36</sup> The lack of musical training (*amousia*) of the third generation was due to the neglect of the Muses of the second generation. And so the second generation were unable any longer, because of their lack of natural ability (*aphyia*), to bring up their children with the whole and complete education. The lack of ability of the second generation was due to the first generation's miscalculation in its search for the appropriate time for [the younger generation's] marriages. Since they<sup>37</sup> had deduced the appropriate time from sense perception – and it requires much diligence and good fortune to avoid many such errors and [it requires] strength to detect the truth 'with difficulty through dull organs'<sup>38</sup> – they will hold that the calculation will have no role in the fated dissolution of the constitution

<sup>35</sup> Proclus' point is that the lowest class, no longer being content to follow the lead of the rulers, itself wishes to rule and that the highest classes prove to be less good (and therefore less likely to make all three classes content) than their counterparts in the first generation.

<sup>36</sup> διὰ τὴν τῶν ἀνομοίων ἀδιάκριτον σύγχυσιν (2.6.16–17): see τὰ διαφέροντα εἶδη τῆς ζωῆς (2.5.26–7) and our note above. The inability to harmonise a concordance from various notes in a musical scale leads to the inability to harmonise the qualities in the souls of the rulers. For the term σύγχυσις, see συγχεθέντων (2.5.28), σύγχυσιν (2.6.2), and συγκεχυμένοις (2.6.3).

<sup>37</sup> I.e. the rulers of the second generation.

<sup>38</sup> μόλις δι' ἀμυδρῶν ὀργάνων (2.6.24): The quotation is from Plato, *Phdr.* 250b3–4 (δι' ἀμυδρῶν ὀργάνων μόγις), where Socrates in his myth of the fall of the soul describes how only a few can observe instances of the virtues and 'with difficulty through dull organs' see the Forms that are imaged therein. Proclus changing μόγις to μόλις presents no problem, the words are similar and bear the same meaning; the position of μόλις is insignificant as well. Proclus is most probably quoting from memory.

but they show<sup>39</sup> that sense perception by its own inadequacy is the cause of the errors in the calculations by the rulers that come after them.

7 Thus those in charge of the marriages of the guardians ought to pay serious attention to these three things: the choice of the appropriate time for conception, the sexual coupling of similar [sorts of guardians] (for which there is need of ingenuity in the marriage-lottery),<sup>40</sup> and lawful coupling accompanied by sacrifices. The error made about the  
5 choice of the appropriate time will be the root of the evils that follow, since the dissolution of the political order (*politeia*) and its dissension, from which the dissolution arises, results in the fourth generation from the errors made by the first.

§10 <Aim, character, style, and method: 7.8–8.14>

The aim (*skopos*) of the speech of the Muses is to reveal the causes, of which there are two, through which the dissolution of the best human  
10 political order will occur.<sup>41</sup> One cause [lies] in the complete revolutions of the cosmos and is the periods of fertility and infertility which there are of souls, just as there are of plants, animals, and bodies in different parts of the earth. The other [cause lies] in individuals (*merikos*) and is  
15 seen among the rulers themselves who imitate those [gods] who rule in the cosmos. When these [rulers] make a mistake, the political order will be destroyed. For the guardians are similar to the gods in the universe, the auxiliaries to the daemons, and the labourers to the individual souls. These [gods] are the incorporeal classes, above<sup>42</sup> those in the cosmos

<sup>39</sup> We retain the reading of the MSS. ἀποφαίνουσιν (present indicative). Kroll suggested but did not adopt the future indicative, ἀποφανοῦσιν; Festugière accepted Kroll's suggestion. The present tense here, however, shows the immediacy and continuing truth of the claim that the second generation's use of sense perception is the culprit. The second generation of rulers will believe that sense perception is not at fault but the evidence (for Proclus) clearly shows that it is.

<sup>40</sup> τῆς συζεύξεως τῶν ὁμοίων, πρὸς ἣν δέονται τῆς τῶν κλήρων κομψείας, 7.2–3: see Plato, *Rep.* VI.460a8–10: 'I think that we must make an ingenious lottery so that at each wedding festival the unsound [guardian] blames chance rather than the rulers.' (Κληροὶ δὴ τινες οἶμαι ποιητέοι κομψοί, ὥστε τὸν φαῦλον ἐκείνον αἰτιάσθαι ἐφ' ἐκάστης συνέρξεως τύχην ἀλλὰ μὴ τοὺς ἄρχοντας.) Plato has just explained that the best of the male and female guardians must mate with one another and in order to insure that this happens there should be periodic festivals where they meet; the rulers will make sure that the subsequent mating at those festivals is between the right guardians and will raise the resulting babies separately (*Rep.* 459d7–460a7).

<sup>41</sup> See the discussion of *skopos* in volume I, 1–9 and 43–52. The speech of the Muses is treated as a sufficiently independent text within the text that it can be said to have its own *skopos*, just as a complete Platonic dialogue does.

<sup>42</sup> Kroll noted a lacuna of three letters after γένη ('classes') in 7.18 and suggested να, ρα, or μα as the second two. He would accept ἀνευ ('without') as a possibility, a reading which



who exercise authority over corporeal nature. Just as the errors of souls do not overturn the universe, so also do those of the labourers not overturn the state, but (although this is not lawful [*themis*] to say) if the daemons or gods were inattentive in any way, similarly the inattention of the rulers will destroy our state.<sup>43</sup> 20

The character (*charaktêr*) of the speech is especially sublime (*hypsêlos*), which is appropriate both to Muses, who are foretelling the dissolution and to the present subject matter, which concerns the cosmos. For these reasons [Socrates] himself clearly said that he would speak sublimely,<sup>44</sup> indicating that he is changing from a middle type that is appropriate to speeches about ethics to the grand (*badros*) style that is appropriate to what will be said. 25 8

The style (*idea*) of the whole speech is dignified, which is appropriate both to the present subject matter (for matters involving the universe and souls are dignified (*semnos*)) and to the goddesses. What is recondite and enigmatic (*ainigmatôdês*) is characteristic of dignified writing, for that which is dignified does not wish to be easily accessible to the many. As a result, of the three *charaktêres*<sup>45</sup> the grand character (*badros*) is harmonious with the speech and of the seven styles (*ideai*),<sup>46</sup> the lofty 5

Festugière adopts. Rudolf Schöll read ἄνω ('above'), which we accept here. On either of these readings the same distinction is in play between lower beings concerned with limited, physical things, and the higher entities (encosmic gods, daemons, and individual souls), who are distinguished either by their separateness (ἄνευ) or their superiority (ἄνω) from the lower beings.

<sup>43</sup> The symmetry of Proclus' comparison is thrown out a little as he finds one half of it (the idea that the gods and daemons might neglect their care of the cosmos) unthinkable.

<sup>44</sup> ὑψηλολογούμενος ἔρεῖν: see Plato, *Rep.* VIII.545e3 ὑψηλολογουμένας λέγειν.

<sup>45</sup> The number of 'characters' of speech described by various rhetoricians varied somewhat. Pseudo-Demetrius (*de Elocutione* 36) states that there are four pure characters which can then be mixed in particular combinations, but adds that some say that there are only two (*glaphyros* and *deinos*) and that the others lie between these. A tripartite division like the one which Proclus assumes here also appears in Pseudo-Plutarch, *Vita Homer* 72, as Festugière noted (volume 2, 112, n. 1), where the characters are *megalo*prepês, *mesos*, and *ischnos* ('magnificent', 'middle', and 'small' or 'lean'). The difference is essentially a question of how finely individual rhetoricians want to establish the gradations and how many they view as primary rather than mixtures of others. Proclus works within an established rhetorical tradition, though without making the classifications a central concern, on the assumption that his readers or listeners will recognise his categorisations without effort, on the basis of their own earlier rhetorical training.

<sup>46</sup> Like 'characters' the concept of stylistic types (*ideai*) is important in ancient rhetoric and literary criticism. The fullest and most sophisticated surviving discussion is Hermogenes' *Peri Ideôn*, which arrives at a subdivision of eighteen to twenty *ideai*. The list of seven primary types appears in this text at 1.105–8, where it is said that Demosthenes exhibits them all. They are: *sabhênia*, *megethos*, *kallos*, *gorgotês*, *êthos*, *alêtheia*, *deinotês*. All of these terms appear frequently in the evaluation of rhetoricians,

(*megethos*). For the dignified (*semnos*) falls under the lofty style (*megethos*).

10 The method of teaching is mixed: it is declarative (*apophantikos*)<sup>47</sup> because of those speaking it (it is appropriate for speeches of the gods, and so also to those who are inspired and foretell the future in oracles) and it employs images (*eikonikos*) because of the subject matter (*pragmata*) it is dealing with.<sup>48</sup> For to indicate the truth from numbers is to teach from images (*eikôn*), and using images is conformable to the nature of souls and all<sup>49</sup> cosmic [bodies].

§11 <The dissolution of cosmic and civic bonds: 8.15–9.25>

15 The three [types of] constitution are related to the three demiurgies of Zeus, Dionysus, and Adonis.<sup>50</sup> For every statesman (*politikos*) wishes to imitate some Demiurge: the statesman who establishes all property in common wishes to imitate the Demiurge of the universe (*ta hola*), the one who apportions and divides wishes to imitate the Demiurge who  
20 divides parts from wholes, and the one who sets right the twisted form [of government] wishes to imitate the Demiurge who weaves anew what comes into being and perishes. Now Plato, who is teaching about the first constitution, imitates the universal Demiurge. Just as Plato said that the cosmos is indissoluble because the will of [the Demiurge] him-  
25 self is its greatest bond,<sup>51</sup> so too he says that this constitution since it is

for instance, in Philostratus' *Lives of the Sophists*. Proclus' teacher Syrianus had sufficient interest in Hermogenes that he wrote a surviving commentary on the *Peri Ideôn*.

<sup>47</sup> ἀποφαντικός (2.8.9): See Aristotle, *De Int.* 17.8, where the term signifies an affirmative statement (as opposed to a negation).

<sup>48</sup> τὰ πράγματα (2.8.11): a difficult word to translate. A few lines above it meant 'present subject matter', but here it refers to the objects of study (i.e. souls and celestial bodies).

<sup>49</sup> πᾶσιν (2.8.14): This is the MS reading, but Schöll wished to change the reading to παραδείγμασιν ('models'). Festugière accepted Schöll's change. We believe that the change is too severe and that it is unnecessary. The point is that the Muses' speech not only states facts (and predictions) but also makes use of imagistic language that likens the objects of study (souls and cosmic bodies) to other things (models). There is no need to change the MS wording to derive this meaning from the sentence.

<sup>50</sup> On the three states, see in *Remp.* I 9.17–10.17 and our notes in volume I, 58–9. The three states are those of the *Republic*, the *Laws*, and another alluded to in *Laws* (V.739b). Here in the *Republic Commentary*, Proclus associates each of the three forms of government with a presiding divinity (Zeus, Dionysus, and Adonis) and relates each form with a kind of demiurgy or act of creation in the cosmos. Cf. (with Kroll and Festugière) Proclus, in *Tim.* I.446.5–8. See also Festugière's translation of Proclus' in *Tim.* vol. 2, 326 n. 1.

<sup>51</sup> ἐκεῖνος ἄλυτον εἶπεν εἶναι τὸν κόσμον διὰ τὴν αὐτοῦ βούλησιν μέγιστον οὖσαν δεσμόν: cf. Plato, *Tim.* 41b4–5, where the Demiurge addresses the younger gods about their continued existence, οὐτι μὲν δὴ λυθήσεσθαι γε οὐδὲ τεύξεσθαι θανάτου μοίρας, τῆς ἐμῆς βουλήσεως μείζονος ἔτι δεσμοῦ καὶ κυριωτέρου λαχόντες ('you will not die nor will you

human is not indissoluble, but that it is difficult to break up because of the virtues of its rulers. For he attributes the cause of the difficulty for such a structure to undergo change<sup>52</sup> to its statesman (*politikos*), just as he attributes the universe's [resistance to dissolution] to the Demiurge. 9 The term 'structure' (*systasis*) is appropriate to demiurgy, for he said that the [act of demiurgy] structured the universe and he called the cosmos 'structured' (*systatos*).<sup>53</sup> Just as the cosmos consists of many bonds, 5 such as [the bonds of] the elements, of proportion, of psychic mean terms, of ensoulment, and before these of the will of the Demiurge, thus also this political order (*politeia*) possesses various sorts of bonds: the pursuits are common, the children are common, and the possessions are common. And so, just as the cosmos is indissoluble, this [state] is difficult to dissolve. If [the state] is somehow dissolvable because of 10 [the fact of its] generation, it is clear that the cosmos (since it does not admit of dissolution entirely) is ungenerated.<sup>54</sup> Since he has attributed the cause itself of the dissolution [partly] to an error of sense perception and [partly] to the completion of the [heavenly] circuit, in order that you might have the particular cause and the necessity [that comes] from the universe, he teaches clearly that even if the events that befall those with true knowledge (*epistēmōn*) are hard to bear, they would generally 15 happen almost solely because of our common nature. For example, sickness or any other sort of suffering does not occur because of the lives of those [with true knowledge], but because of the cosmic order, although those who do not have true knowledge suffer much through their own fault. Thus [Plato says] the heavenly circuit brings about the

meet the fate of death since you share in my will, which is a still greater and stronger bond').

<sup>52</sup> τοῦ χαλεπὸν εἶναι κινηθῆναι τὴν οὕτω συστάσαν (2.8.27–8): see Plato, *Rep.* VIII.546a1 χαλεπὸν μὲν κινηθῆναι πόλιν οὕτω συστάσαν ('it is difficult for a state so structured to undergo change').

<sup>53</sup> Proclus is selecting various uses of συνίστημι/σύστασις in Plato's *Timaeus* to support his argument here. See *Tim.* 41d8 συστήσας δὲ τὸ πᾶν, where the Demiurge 'after he has structured everything/the universe' creates souls equal in number to the stars. Proclus here plays on the two meanings of τὸ πᾶν. Cf. *Tim.* 31c5–6 τῶν δὲ τεττάρων ἐν ὅλον ἕκαστον εἴληφεν ἡ τοῦ κόσμου σύστασις ('The structure of the cosmos has used up each one of the four [elements]').

<sup>54</sup> Reading (2.9–10) εἰ δὲ λυτὴ πῶς ἔστιν διὰ τὴν γένεσιν, δηλὸν ὡς ὁ κόσμος μὴδ' ὅλως λύσιν ἐπιδεχόμενος ἀγένητός ἐστιν, with the manuscripts and Kroll. Usener, followed by Festugière, proposed εἰ δὲ λυτὴ πῶς (ἡ πολιτεία), ἔστιν διὰ τὴν γένεσιν δηλὸν <ᾧτις>, ὡς ὁ κόσμος μὴδ' ὅλως λύσιν ἐπιδεχόμενος ἀγένητός ἐστιν: 'If the state is somehow dissolvable, it is clear that it is because it is generated, just as it is clear that the cosmos (since it does not admit of dissolution entirely) is ungenerated.' The suggested change is unnecessary and affects the meaning only slightly. Either way, Proclus has inserted an allusion to the doctrine that Plato does not intend that the cosmos had a beginning in time. For the origin of the controversy, see Dillon (1977), 7.

dissolution of the state (as the state is a generated entity) and it employs the error which the guardians make through sense perception and which is of necessity rare, just as the failure of experts (*epistēmôn*) who employ sense perception (such as doctors or ship captains) [is rare]. For they rarely fail and are very often successful. Therefore the dissolution of such a state occurs over a long period of time.

§12 <The cosmos is generated, but not generated in time: 9.26–11.16>

These axioms, which are in the *De Caelo*,<sup>55</sup> appear in Plato: (1) ‘Everything generated is destructible’ here<sup>56</sup> and (2) ‘Everything un-generated is indestructible’ in the *Phaedrus*,<sup>57</sup> where he says ‘Since it is ungenerated, it is necessary that it also be indestructible’. For he adds this manner of speaking, making clear that the axiom is necessary. Since these things are so, it is clear that the cosmos is in itself generated in another way but is not generated in time. For then it would be destructible. If some should say that although it is destructible by nature, it is indestructible because of the will of god, [we would reply that] if the indestructible is ungenerated (for the relationship [between the two axioms] is reversible since both of them are necessary),<sup>58</sup> they will grant that god has made the generated cosmos ungenerated. For the one who has made it indestructible has at the same time made it ungenerated because of the necessity of the consequence. Plato himself says, however, that it is impossible for god to make what has been generated [be] un-generated.<sup>59</sup> Thus also [god does not make] the destructible indestructible, otherwise you would destroy the previously mentioned axioms.

How is it clear that everything that is generated is destructible? Because everything that is generated is generated by some cause, and this cause is moved (*kinoumenon*). For what is generated by an unmoved cause is ungenerated since it is eternal, and it coexists simultaneously with the existence of that [unmoved cause]. For what is unmoved would in every way be ungenerated. For every act of generation is either a

<sup>55</sup> Aristotle, *Cael.* I.12.

<sup>56</sup> That is ‘here’ in Plato, *Rep.* 564a2: ἐπεὶ γενομένων παντὶ φθορά ἐστιν.

<sup>57</sup> Plato, *Phdr.* 245d3–4: ἐπειδὴ δὲ ἀγένητόν ἐστιν, καὶ ἀδιάφθορον αὐτὸ ἀνάγκη εἶναι. The subject is ‘the soul’.

<sup>58</sup> That is to say: if one of the axioms is true, the other must be true as well.

<sup>59</sup> Plato, *Lg.* 934a: οὐ γὰρ τὸ γεγονὸς ἀγένητον ἔσται ποτέ (cited by Kroll and Festugière). The statement refers not to cosmic processes but applying a proper punishment for human wrong-doing, and god does not make an appearance here. It’s an odd reference for Proclus to make in this context, but it is a memorable quotation. It also follows in the *Laws* a long discussion about the soul as a self-mover and therefore the ungenerated cause of generated motions (895a, ff.).

motion or occurs along with some motion. Thus if it is generated by some cause, then [it is generated] by a cause that is moved. The cause that is moved cannot remain in the same state: since it is generated in a part of the movement, it will be destroyed in another part of it. If the cause did not exist, the effect could not exist. When the motion that caused the effect has ceased to exist, the effect will perish. Because the effect was not the final product of a universal motion, it is evident that a prior [cause] set in motion the cause of this resulting product.<sup>60</sup> If the effect arises from a part of the motion, then (when that part ceases to exist) the effect will not exist. 25

How is it that what is destructible has been generated? For if it is destructible, it has some opposite, and this doubtless is destructive of it. For everything that is destroyed is destroyed by its opposite. (1) If it should have an opposite, either there is a pathway from that opposite to itself (and so it would be generated) or (2) if it itself is destroyed, there will exist only its opposite – an opposite that has been generated but is indestructible since it no longer changes back into it. But it has been shown that everything that is generated is destructible, and therefore it will be destroyed. The opposite [quality] is the destruction of its own opposite and thus the one will be generated from the other. Therefore it is not ungenerated.<sup>61</sup> 11 5

How is it that everything that is ungenerated is indestructible? For, if it is destructible and we have shown that everything that is destructible is generated, the ungenerated will be generated. Thus [rather] what is ungenerated will be indestructible. Similarly also the indestructible is 10

<sup>60</sup> ὅτι γὰρ οὐ πάσης ἦν ἀποτέλεσμα τῆς κινήσεως, δηλοῖ τὸ καὶ πρότερον κινεῖσθαι τὸ αἴτιον τῆς τούτου συστάσεως (2.10.25–7): This is a difficult text. We have taken ὅτι as causal and assumed that the subject of ἦν is ‘the effect’ in the previous sentence. For the translation of πάσης as ‘universal’, see Festugière’s citation of a scholiast to this sentence (378,7–12) (although his translation of the sentence differs from ours). Proclus’ point is that a self-moving (and hence universal) cause is sufficient to explain the produced effect, whereas a moved cause must have a self-moving cause prior to it before it can secondarily cause the effect.

<sup>61</sup> Proclus presents an argument that opposites that are generated from one another cannot be indestructible. If we take the opposites as ‘white’ and ‘black’, and imagine that when a thing’s whiteness is destroyed the thing becomes black and *vice versa*, we can see how the argument works. The first half of the disjunction, then, is true. If white is the opposite of black, then change can take place from a thing being white to being black, and so its blackness is generated from its whiteness. The second disjunct is false: If the white is destroyed, the only possibility left is that the black exists and (since the white is gone) it would be eternally black. But, Proclus would argue, since everything that is generated is destructible (proven in 10.15–28) the white when it is destroyed must become black (and *vice versa*), and so the sequence shows that the black would again be able to become white.

ungenerated. For if it is generated, the indestructible will be destructible. For it has been shown that everything that is generated is destructible.

All four axioms therefore are true, since they depend upon two axioms. The first axiom states that everything that comes into existence from an unmoved [cause] is unchangeable in its essence; the second that  
 15 everything that comes into existence from a moving [cause] is changeable in its essence.

### §13 <Time and eternity: 11.17–12.2>

What does he mean by ‘for all time’ when he says ‘such a political constitution will not remain for all time’?<sup>62</sup> If all time is an image of all eternity (for eternity is called ‘all’ [when Plato writes] ‘Thus the paradigm is for all eternity’)<sup>63</sup> and [if] all eternity is a measure, all time is then also a measure.<sup>64</sup> But one is the measure of the life of the Intelligible Living Creature and the other (viz. time) of the life of this cosmos.<sup>65</sup> Time would be the complete measure of the universal cosmic return of  
 20 all the corporeal and incorporeal motions in the cosmos. This motion, since it is repeated<sup>66</sup> many times, makes infinite time. Because of the infinite power in eternity it receives [a kind of] infinity appropriate to the realm of generation, becoming infinite by its repetition, while [the Intelligible]<sup>67</sup> is infinite but ungenerated. Time, being whole, contains  
 25 the whole lifetime of the whole cosmic return, in which what has not been destroyed is indestructible.<sup>68</sup> Nothing that is destructible persists  
 12

<sup>62</sup> οὐδ’ ἡ τοιαύτη σύστασις τὸν ἅπαντα μενεῖ χρόνον, Plato, *Rep.* 546a2–3.

<sup>63</sup> τὸ μὲν οὖν παράδειγμα τὸν ἅπαντα αἰῶνά ἐστιν, 11.20–1. See Plato, *Tim.* 38c1–2: τὸ μὲν γὰρ δὴ παράδειγμα πάντα αἰῶνά ἐστιν ὄν. (‘For the paradigm is that which exists for all time.’) Plato is distinguishing eternity from sempiternity (διαίωνια, 38b8).

<sup>64</sup> Festugière compares Proclus, in *Tim.* III.17.22–18.2, where Proclus says that eternity is a measure of intelligible entities, time of encosmic entities. See Baltzly’s notes *ad loc.* (2013), 64–5.

<sup>65</sup> For the distinction that Proclus is here applying to time and eternity, see Plato, *Tim.* 30c2–31a1, where Plato argues that the Demiurge looks to the Intelligible Living Creature to fashion its visible image (the cosmos). This Intelligible Living Creature ‘embraces all the Intelligible living things in itself’ (τὰ γὰρ δὴ νοητὰ ζῶα πάντα ἐκεῖνο ἐν ἑαυτῷ περιλαβὼν ἔχει, 30c7–8).

<sup>66</sup> Literally ‘unrolled’ (ἀνελίσσόμενον, 11.26): from any given point in time in the cosmos the planets and stars eventually return to their starting point (συναποκατάστασις, 11.25) and then the process begins again, and so on *ad infinitum*.

<sup>67</sup> The referent of the feminine demonstrative pronoun is the ‘life of the Intelligible Living Thing’ (ἐκείνης is τῆς τοῦ νοητοῦ ζώου ζωῆς, 11.22–3), i.e. the eternity of the Form itself and of the world of the Forms.

<sup>68</sup> The point of the sentence is that time carries on continuously through every cosmic return (ἀποκατάστασις), and during that time the various parts of the cosmos remain indestructible.

for all time. Nothing that persists in the cosmos throughout all of the cosmos' cyclical life is destructible,<sup>69</sup> so that there is nothing that exists 5  
apart from the whole cosmic life, but all of the generation of everything  
and every psychic and corporeal change is contained in this universe.  
For these reasons the Muses characterise time as 'all',<sup>70</sup> since they have  
put forward the fully complete number that determines every change  
and that becomes infinite by recurring. Therefore in this case the infin- 10  
ity is not as it were all at once, as in the case of eternity.<sup>71</sup>

§14 <The orbits of the cosmic revolutions determine the measure  
of all lives: 12.13–15.7>

Plants differ from animals not because of [lack of] sense perception  
as the Peripatetics would have it (for Plato knows that plants also  
have perception)<sup>72</sup> but because of their immobility *versus* the animals' 15

<sup>69</sup> Keeping the reading of the MS φθαρτόν ('destructible', 12.5); Festugière wished, following Usener, to change the reading to ἀφθαρτόν ('indestructible'), but no such change is necessary. Festugière would translate: 'Car rien de ce qui a eu son cours de la vie du Monde ne reste indestructible durant toute la vie du Monde en l'une de ses révolutions.' Festugière's assumption is that everything in the cosmos eventually perishes, but Proclus' point is the opposite. Matter and immaterial beings persist in the cosmos through all of its cycles. Nothing is destroyed, under the guarantee of the Demiurge. Our translation 'persists' captures the meaning of the participle συζῆσαν ('passing its life' or 'spending its time', 12.4), although it loses the force of the pun 'passing one's life . . . throughout all of the cosmos' cyclical life', which literal translation displays more clearly that each individual life is directly related to the cosmos' cyclical life.

<sup>70</sup> The reference is to Plato, *Rep.* 546a1–3, where (as we have seen) Plato writes that since the ideal state has been brought to be, it is susceptible to destruction and so 'will not remain for all time' (οὐδ' ἡ τοιαύτη σύστασις τὸν ἅπαντα μενεῖ χρόνον, a2–3). This completes Proclus' comparison of the state to the cosmos. Both are generated in time and subject to destruction, but the cosmos has a cyclical sempiternity that the state lacks.

<sup>71</sup> The distinction again arises from the *Timaeus*. Plato wrote that the Demiurge made time after the pattern of the eternity in which the Intelligible Living Creature exists (*Tim.* 37d3–7). Of time he wrote: '[The Demiurge] had in mind to make some moving image of eternity, and at the same time as he was ordering the cosmos, he made of the eternity that remained in unity an eternal image that moved in accordance with number, and he named it "time"' (εἰκὼ δ' ἐπενόει κινήτὸν τινα αἰῶνος ποιῆσαι, καὶ διακοσμῶν ἅμα οὐρανὸν ποιεῖ μένοντος αἰῶνος ἐν ἐνὶ κατ' ἀριθμὸν ἰοῦσαν αἰῶνιον εἰκόνα, τοῦτον δὲ δὴ χρόνον ὠνομάκαμεν, d5–7). Here in the *Republic Commentary*, Proclus emphasises that time is not the same as eternity. Eternity is 'all at once', and time is not. Festugière refers to Proclus, in *Tim.* III.14.27, ff. See also III.17.27–8: ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν αἰὼν μέτρον ὡς τὸ ἐν, ὁ δὲ χρόνος ὡς ὁ ἀριθμός ('Eternity is a measure as a unity, but time as a number').

<sup>72</sup> Plato, *Tim.* 77a4–b1, where Plato writes that into plants and trees, the younger gods 'blended a nature related to human nature but with different forms and sensations, so



locomotion. Therefore Plato called the first (those rooted in the earth) ‘in the earth’ and the others (those moving on the earth) ‘on the earth’.<sup>73</sup> Plato says that not only for plants that are in the earth (inasmuch as they are rooted in it) but also for animals that are moving on the earth,  
 20 some celestial circuits create ease of birth and difficulty of birth for their bodies and souls. He said ‘not only for the plants’ [546a4] after he had begun from these, since the power of the fateful celestial circuits shows itself in those things which least have a share of the self-moved life, and such are plants (for Timaeus has said that in these alone  
 25 there is not self-motion but they are the third sort of soul).<sup>74</sup> Therefore [plants] derive their name from ‘nature’.<sup>75</sup> For we say that fate is life [in accordance with] nature . . .<sup>76</sup> Plato himself says clearly in the *Politicus*: ‘Its fated and innate appetite turned the cosmos back again.’<sup>77</sup> So Plato says that it is not among these [i.e. plants] alone that [there are measures]<sup>78</sup> that cyclically bring conceptions that are easy and those that are difficult (and plants seem especially to live according to fate alone since they are not self-moved) but also among those that possess

that it was a different [kind of] animal’ (τῆς γὰρ ἀνθρωπίνης συγγενῆ φύσεως φύσιν ἄλλαις ἰδέαις καὶ αἰσθήσεσιν κεραννύντες, ὥσθ’ ἕτερον ζῶον εἶναι, 77a3–5).

<sup>73</sup> Proclus is interpreting *Rep.* 546a4–7, where Plato explains how the ideal state deteriorates when the rulers mistake the appropriate times for the guardians to give birth: ‘Not only for plants that are rooted in the earth but also among animals on the earth fertility and infertility of soul and body occur whenever the cycles of each come full circle, a shorter cycle for shorter-lived creatures and an opposite cycle for longer-lived’ (οὐ μόνον φυτοῖς ἐγγείοις, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν ἐπιγείοις ζώοις φορὰ καὶ ἀφορία ψυχῆς τε καὶ σωμάτων γίγνονται, ὅταν περιτροπαί ἐκάστοις κύκλων περιφορὰς συνάπτωσι, βραχυβίοις μὲν βραχυπόρους, ἐναντίοις δὲ ἐναντίας). Proclus had already alluded to this passage in Essay 7, I.219.8–15, where he wrote that the ideal state deteriorates because the guardians make a mistake in regard to the ‘musical arts’, which he glosses as the knowledge of good and evil (ἐπιστήμην ἔχοντος τῶν ἀγαθῶν καὶ κακῶν, 219.22) and which he associates with mathematics and dialectic (τῶν μαθημάτων αὐτῶ καὶ διαλεκτικῆς μεταδοτέον, 219.26–7).

<sup>74</sup> *Tim.* 77a3–c5. Plato has Timaeus say that the gods provided ‘trees, plants, and seeds’ (77a6) as a form of nourishment for human beings. Anything, he says, that has a share of life (ὅτιπερ ἂν μετάρχη τοῦ ζῆν, 77b2) can be called a living thing, and this class of living things ‘shares in what we now call the third form of soul, which is situated between the midriff and the navel’ (μετέχει γε μὴν τοῦτο ὃ νῦν λέγομεν τοῦ τρίτου ψυχῆς εἶδους, ὃ μετὰξυ φρενῶν ὁμφαλοῦ τε ἰδρυῖσθαι, 77b3–4). He goes on to say that what possesses only this type of soul is rooted where it is and cannot move itself (77c3–5). Thus, in this way plants, etc. are similar to the human irrational soul.

<sup>75</sup> Proclus concludes that the word ‘plant’ (τὸ φυτόν) is etymologically dependent on the word for ‘nature’ (ἡ φύσις).

<sup>76</sup> Kroll marks a lacuna of 15 letters.

<sup>77</sup> Plato, *Phl.* 272e5–6: τὸν δὲ δὴ κόσμον πάλιν ἀνέστρεφεν εἰμαρμένη τε καὶ σύμφυτος ἐπιθυμία. The god who guides the cosmos has let it go, and the cosmos takes on its natural motions, which are less harmonious.

<sup>78</sup> There is a lacuna of eleven letters, into which Kroll inserted *exempli gratia* εἶναι μέτρα.



a fuller and freer life (for fate seems to do battle with those that do not master themselves). In reality, the soul, when it is yoked with the body, lives in accordance with fate, since it is related to body (*sômatoeidês*) either in accordance with its existence (*hyparxis*) or in relation (*skhesis*).<sup>79</sup> 10  
Thus the measures of lifetimes and the different kinds of life arise for everything from the orbits of the cosmic revolutions. As Aristotle says at least, the less important circuits follow along with the more important ones.<sup>80</sup> The more important ones are those of eternal beings; the less important of mortals. Since all the eternal [circuits] contribute to 15  
everything that is mortal, some are causes of the lifecycle for some of them and others for others. For example, for one the cause is the circuit of the Moon, for another that of Saturn, and for another there is another cause which may be obvious or unclear to us. Thus, everything that moves in an orbit (*kyklos*) has a circuit (*peridos*) and is the cause of the lifecycle (*peritropê*) for some mortal entity, whether [that moving 20  
body] is a divine, angelic, or daemonic vehicle.<sup>81</sup> For this reason, the measures of the three lives<sup>82</sup> also differ in duration of time as do the kinds of life that they lead because the different causes are also always in motion. But what is the cause of what escapes us. We wonder why one animal lives for one day, such as the one around the Hypanis River 25  
that is born at sunrise and dies at sunset,<sup>83</sup> and why another lives for

<sup>79</sup> The distinction is between the soul in its essence (καθ' ὑπαρξιν, 13.9) and the soul in relation to the the body (κατὰ σχέσιν, 13.10). In its essence, the soul is rational but when it is embodied (σώματοειδής, 13.10) it exists apart from its essence, encumbered by the body and its irrational aspect.

<sup>80</sup> Aristotle, *GA* IV.9.778a1–2: 'It is logical that the cycles of the less important follow along with those of the more important' (κατὰ λόγον γὰρ ἀκολουθεῖν καὶ τὰς τῶν ἀκυροτέρων περιόδους ταῖς τῶν κυριωτέρων). Aristotle's examples include winds which depend on the cycles of the Sun and Moon (*GA* 778a2–4).

<sup>81</sup> The vehicle (ὄχημα) is the ethereal body that belongs to all the visible gods (planets and stars) as well as to all the superior classes (daemons, heroes, and pure souls). Human beings too have an ethereal vehicle, and so our vehicles are affected (like by like) by the higher ethereal vehicles. We have tried to keep Proclus' three terms for circular motions separate: περίοδος 'circuit', κύκλος 'orbit', and περιτροπή 'lifecycle.'

<sup>82</sup> That is, divine life, human life, and animal life. See Festugière's note *ad loc.*

<sup>83</sup> Aristotle discusses this short-lived winged insect at *HA* V.19.552b17–23, and already mentions the synchrony of its life with the Sun's rising and setting. A similar insect is also mentioned by Aelian (*De Natura Animalium* 2.4), who aptly names them *Ephemera*. Unlike Aristotle's insects, who are born from the river Hypanis, Aelian's are born from wine. He draws from their brief life the old opinion of tragedy that it is better to see the light and pass away quickly rather than to live a long life. As is often the case, the traditional material which Proclus uses here (in this instance drawn from the miscellaneous lore associated with animals of different kinds) takes on a new meaning in the developed system of late-antique Platonism.

14 nine generations of men who have grown old<sup>84</sup> because we do not see  
that everything in the cosmos moves in circles and what sorts of beings  
are in charge of what sorts of lifecycles. It is, however, among these  
[divine bodies] that it is determined what is eternal (because it lives for  
the whole cosmic circuit), what lives for the longest time (because it  
5 lives nearly the same amount of time as this cosmic circuit), and what is  
the shortest lived (because it conducts its own lifecycle in accord with  
the [divine body] that returns to its starting point in the least amount  
of time).

§15 <The meaning of *theion genêton* in *Rep.* 546b3: 14.8–16.2>

By ‘divine and generated’<sup>85</sup> Plato does not mean the whole cosmos  
10 (even if it is primarily this), and not the heavens alone nor what is under  
the Moon, but all that is always in circular motion whether in the  
heavens or under the Moon, since what is corporeal is called engendered  
(for no body is self-constituted), and since the divine is always in  
motion. For it imitates the most divine of beings by having a life that  
is always wakeful. And indeed he did not say that the Perfect Number  
encompasses the cycle (*períodos*) of *the* divine and generated [being]  
15 but [rather] of *a* divine and generated [being] without the definite article,  
through which it is completely clear [that he means] either some  
one or every divine and generated [being].<sup>86</sup> The [genitive] ‘of some  
one’ would be nonsensical, for it would lack specificity, since there are  
very many divine and generated [beings] and not [just] one and [Plato]  
would not have distinguished the generated human race from some *one*  
only of the divine generated [beings]. For indeed a human being is not  
20 different from *one* of the divine [beings] but from all, and has a double  
cycle of better and worse [times for] generation (which double cycle no  
divine generated [being] has) but not some one single [kind] only.<sup>87</sup> He

<sup>84</sup> Plutarch, *De Defectu Oraculorum* 415c quotes a fragment from Hesiod that the crow lives for nine human generations.

<sup>85</sup> Θεῖον γεννητόν: see Plato, *Rep.* 546b3–4, ἔστι δὲ θεῖον μὲν γεννητῶν περίοδος ἣν ἀριθμὸς περιλαμβάνει τέλειος (‘What is divine and engendered has a period which a Perfect Number encompasses’). The phrase, in spite of what Proclus argues, refers to the whole cosmos.

<sup>86</sup> For a similar argument, only with the definite article instead of without it, see (with Festugière) the beginning of Essay 4 and our notes in volume I, 99–100.

<sup>87</sup> The switch from the feminine (περίοδον ἔχει διττήν . . . ἣν μηδὲν ἔχει θεῖον γεννητόν, lines 21–2) to the neuter (ἀλλ’ οὐχὶ ἐν τι μόνον, line 23) is harsh. Our translation assumes that the clause ἣν μηδὲν ἔχει θεῖον γεννητόν (‘which double cycle no divine generated [being] has’) is parenthetical and that the two surrounding clauses περίοδον ἔχει διττήν, ἀμεινόνων καὶ χειρόνων γενέσεων (‘has a double cycle of better and worse [times for]

means, therefore, of *every* divine and generated [being] and not of some *one* when he says ‘There is a cycle for a divine and generated [being], which the Perfect Number encompasses’ [546b3–4]. A Perfect Number does not encompass the period of other [generated beings]. For if someone should say that the cosmos alone is called divine and generated and that for this reason its cyclical number is perfect, it would [in that case] be laughable to compare human beings and their cycle to that of the cosmos. The analogy would not then be well ordered, even though it is the Muses who are saying these things. He therefore means ‘every divine and generated [being]’, and that what is human is generated afterward.

Since generated [beings] are either always in motion or not always in motion, having called everything that is always in motion divine, Plato distinguished the human from them inasmuch as [the human] no longer has a single life that is also the same in number nor [does it have] a precisely similar cycle (*periodos*). Therefore one Perfect Number encompasses the cycle of that whole [category of generated being], [a number which] is unique for each and has the same point of return,<sup>88</sup> since it has no addition to or subtraction from it. The most perfect of all [of these Perfect Numbers] is that of the universe. This is because the others, although they are perfect, are parts of the time of the cosmos’ time, as they are also themselves all moving parts of the cosmos, and their lives are [parts] of the life of the cosmos and their cycles [parts] of the cycles [of the cosmos].

Thus the whole body [of the cosmos] and each body [in the cosmos] is generated, even if it is eternal and entirely ungenerated in time, inasmuch as it is generated only from another cause, with its cause eternally causing it from its very being.<sup>89</sup> Those generated in time, however, are generated in the strict sense, of which the human [race] is acknowledged to be first. Consequently, it is clear that there are other mortal

generation’) and ἀλλ’ οὐχὶ ἓν τι μόνον (‘but not some one single [kind] only’) both refer to human beings.

<sup>88</sup> Each generated being is encompassed by a Perfect Number, which measures out its cycle and its unique point/time of return. For ἀποκατάστασις (a return to one’s starting place in the circuit of the heavens) and its related adjective ἀποκαταστατικός, see Proclus, *Inst.* 199: Πᾶσα ψυχὴ ἐγκόσμιος περιόδοις χρήται τῆς οἰκείας ζωῆς καὶ ἀποκαταστάσεσιν (‘Every encosmic soul makes use of cycles of its own life and its own [cyclical] returns’). Each soul has its own return or restoration to its starting point (ἀποκαθίσταται ἀπὸ τῶν αὐτῶν ἐπὶ τὰ αὐτά, 199.6). See also *Inst.* 198 and 200 and Dodds’ notes on 301–3.

<sup>89</sup> See (with Festugière) Kroll’s app. crit. to these lines: *ideo tantum omne corpus genitum est, quod ex alio natum est* (‘Therefore every body is created only because it is born from another’). Every body, even an eternal one (e.g. the cosmos itself) is generated in the sense that it is caused by another (i.e. the Demiurge) which brings it into existence from the cause’s own being (τῷ εἶναι).

[beings] before us as well, for demiurgy did not proceed immediately from eternal, rational [beings] to this weak, short-lived animal, but there are also other long-lived classes dwelling near the gods, <which>  
 25 we sometimes <place into that ordering>,<sup>90</sup> and [at some time some]  
 16 transition of those might occur into our class,<sup>91</sup> although they are not positioned there truly in accordance with their essence but are the lowest there [in a relative way].<sup>92</sup>

§16 < The Perfect Number (*Rep.* 546b5) for every divine generated period is intellectual: 16.3–19.17>

5 It is not right to understand the Perfect Number only by counting it on one's fingers (for it is more a numbered thing than a number, and it is in the process of being perfect but never perfect since it is always in the process of becoming), but [to understand that] its cause is on the one hand intellectual and on the other embraces the finite boundary of the cycle (*periodos*) of all the cosmos. Just as Mên,<sup>93</sup> who is the god in charge of the Moon, brings into existence the number of days of the month of the Moon's cycle (*periodos*),<sup>94</sup> and just as the Seasons generate the visible measures of the seasons, so too the Perfect Number well beforehand is the one that establishes [the cycle of the cosmos] before [the cycle] is set in motion. For each one of the [beings] that are in eternal motion there is some Intellect that simultaneously brings about the life in it and its corporeal return (*apokatastasis*). It therefore is not necessary to  
 10

<sup>90</sup> The text is corrupt; 11 letters are missing. We translate Kroll's suggested text: <α> εἰς ἐκείνην [τὴν τάξιν τατ]τόμεθά ποτε. Proclus' point is that the Demiurge, as he structures the cosmos, would not have skipped from the gods on high to mere humans far below, but would have included the superior classes (angels, daemons, heroes) between them.

<sup>91</sup> This clause is also corrupt, with eleven letters missing. We again follow Kroll: γένοιτο δ' αὖν [ποτε καὶ τις] ἐκείνων εἰς τὸ γένος ἡμῶν μετάβασις. The 'transition' (μετάβασις) is the downward grouping of beings from the gods through the superior classes to us.

<sup>92</sup> This last clause is also corrupt, with ten letters missing. Kroll suggested ἀλλὰ [κατὰ σχέσιν] ἐσχάτων ἐκεῖ γιγνομένων, presumably so that κατὰ σχέσιν would stand in contradistinction to κατ' οὐσίαν in the previous clause. For the distinction, see volume I, 117 nn. 68 and 69. If Kroll's reading is correct, the idea would be that the superior classes exist by their essence in the realm above human beings but since they also affect our level they also exist here at the human level (which is the lowest level at which they work) relationally to us.

<sup>93</sup> Mên is a lunar deity of Asia Minor. A Lydian inscription calls him Εἷς θεὸς ἐν οὐρανοῖς, μέγας Μῆν οὐράνιος, μεγάλη δύναμις τοῦ ἀθανάτου θεοῦ ('One god in the heavens, great celestial Mên') (cited in Nock (1972), 38). The association with the month is suggested by the similarity between his name and the Greek word for month. See also Lane (1990).

<sup>94</sup> Literally 'causes to exist the numbered month of the Moon's cycle', that is to say the god determines the number of days it takes for the Moon to pass through all its phases.

seek what the Perfect Number is by looking into so many different and countless [numbers]. For it is not possible to discover this number in the universe because it is not possible to discover the cycles (*periodos*) of everything that is moved. [It is not possible to discover] everything that is moved circularly since there are many more divine and daemonic bodies that cannot be seen, and since it is impossible to discover the cycle of each of those we do see (such as those that do not wander [i.e. the fixed stars]). For each is moved around its own centre, and since it has moved it takes a certain time for its cycle, in accordance with which it comes to an end in the same point [as it began]. Daemons might know the number of this [cycle], but for human beings it is impossible. Even if the times of those [cycles] visible to us had been discovered,<sup>95</sup> what sort of intellect would have discovered the cyclical numbers of all the daemonic or other motions? However, it is necessary to measure the number of the return of the universe [to its original position] from all of these things. It is therefore much more unlikely that we will discover that [number]. As many as have tried to discover the one Perfect Number from the seven kosmokrators thought that they had the whole universe when they were looking at a part of it. One must not accept such a number from them, since it is a number that is impossible to discover, is never perfect,<sup>96</sup> does not embrace the cycle but stretches along beside it,<sup>97</sup> and is not what others say – that it is eternity itself, which is [rather] the father of time. Now it [i.e. eternity] does in fact embrace [something] but not the cycle of what is divine and generated but (as Aristotle says)<sup>98</sup> infinite time itself. Moreover, eternity is not a number but is prior to all number, ‘remaining in its unity’, as the *Timaeus* says.<sup>99</sup> For number exists where there is otherness,

<sup>95</sup> Reading ἐστ[ιν. εἰ δὲ καὶ] τῶνδε ἡρῶντο οἱ χρόνοι τῶν [ἡμῖν ὄρα]τῶν with Schöll.

<sup>96</sup> Or ‘complete’.

<sup>97</sup> συμπαρατεινόμενον: cf. Plotinus, *Enn.* III.7.13.45–6: “Ἡ ὅτι τὸ πρὸ ταύτης ἐστὶν αἰὼν οὐ συμπαραθέων οὐδὲ συμπαρατεινῶν αὐτῇ. ‘For what is prior to this [i.e. to soul] is eternity, which neither runs along beside nor stretches along beside it.’ Eternity belongs to Intellect; souls exist in time. Thus, for Proclus, the Perfect Number (which belongs to eternity properly) does not embrace the temporal cycle of the cosmos but runs parallel to it. Cp. Plato, *Tim.* 37d5: εἰκὼς δ’ ἐπενόει κινητὸν τινα αἰῶνος ποιῆσαι ([The Demiurge] ‘thought to make [time] a moving image of eternity’).

<sup>98</sup> *Cael.* I.9, 279a25–8: ‘In the same way [as the word αἰὼν can indicate the completion of a lifecycle of a single animal], the completion (τέλος) of the whole heaven, the completion that embraces all and infinite time is eternity, having taken its name from “always existing” (ἀεὶ εἶναι), [and it is] immortal and divine’ (κατὰ τὸν αὐτὸν δὲ λόγον καὶ τὸ τοῦ παντός οὐρανοῦ τέλος καὶ τὸ τὸν πάντα χρόνον καὶ τὴν ἀπειρίαν περιέχον τέλος αἰὼν ἐστίν, ἀπὸ τοῦ ἀεὶ εἶναι εἰληφώς τὴν ἐπωνυμίαν, ἀθάνατος καὶ θεῖος).

<sup>99</sup> ἐν ἐνὶ μένων: cf. *Tim.* 37d.6: διακοσμών ἅμα οὐρανὸν ποιεῖ μένοντος αἰῶνος ἐν ἐνὶ κατ’ ἀριθμὸν ἰοῦσαν αἰώνιον εἰκόνα: ‘[The Demiurge] while arranging the heavens makes an

but eternity is prior to otherness and prior to the All-Perfect Living Thing.<sup>100</sup> But since visible (*emphanês*) time revolves according to number, as the *Timaeus* says,<sup>101</sup> the number of revolutions (*kuklos*) would be prior to this, since it concerns the return of the whole cycle (*periodos*) [to its starting point]. If that [Perfect Number] were in the realm of generation, it will again be so in accordance with another number and [so on] into infinity. If, however, there is a number that independently always exists and is a cause of time that revolves in accordance with number, since this number is intellectual and is thus a kind of time that is like an Intelligible choreographer,<sup>102</sup> it will be the cause of the dance for the cosmos since the circular return to its starting point <is called> a dance. In the seventh book of the *Republic* Socrates <named> it ‘the true number’ and says that in it are Velocity Itself and Slowness Itself and that it is necessary that one truly skilled in astronomy look to it instead of to the visible heavenly temporal measurements, on which the many who pay heed to the heavens waste their time.<sup>103</sup> If

eternal image (which moves according to number) of eternity (which remains in unity).’

<sup>100</sup> ὁ δὲ αἰὼν πρὸ ἐτερότητας καὶ πρὸ τοῦ ζώου τοῦ παντελοῦς: See Plato, *Tim.* 31a8–b3, where Plato (summing up an argument that the Form of the Living Thing must contain in unity all the species of animals in the realm of becoming) concludes that since there is a unitary Intelligible Form, so too there is a single cosmos (and not multiple ones). He writes: ‘Thus in order that this [world] be similar in its unity to the All-Perfect Living Thing, the maker of the cosmos for these reasons makes not two or infinite cosmoi, but this one uniform heaven having come into being, exists and will continue to exist.’ Proclus is also echoing Plotinus VI.6.15.1–10, where Plotinus argues that all living things in the visible world imitate as far as they can the Intelligible Being, Intellect, and the Perfect Living thing (ὄν . . . καὶ νοῦν καὶ ζῶον τέλειον, lines 9–10) and concludes: ‘It is necessary that [the Living Thing] be the complete number itself. For if it were not perfect, it would be lacking some number; and if the whole number of living things were not in it, it would not be the All-Perfect Living Thing. Thus number is prior to every animal [in the visible cosmos] and to the All-Perfect Living Thing [in the Intelligible]’ (Ἀριθμὸν δὴ δεῖ αὐτὸν εἶναι σύμπαντα· εἰ γὰρ μὴ τέλος εἴη, ἑλλείποι ἂν ἀριθμῶ τινι· καὶ εἰ μὴ πᾶς ἀριθμὸς ζώων ἐν αὐτῷ εἴη, παντελὲς ζῶον οὐκ ἂν εἴη. Ἔστιν οὖν ὁ ἀριθμὸς πρὸ ζώου παντός καὶ τοῦ παντελοῦς ζώου, 6–11). Thus, for Proclus, eternity is a kind of unity that exists prior to and embraces the multiplicity of the visible world.

<sup>101</sup> ἀλλ’ ἐπεὶ κατ’ ἀριθμὸν ὁ χρόνος ὁ ἐμφανὴς κυκλεῖται: Cf. Plato, *Tim.* 38a7–8, ἀλλὰ χρόνου . . . κατ’ ἀριθμὸν κυκλοῦμενον.

<sup>102</sup> χορόνους, 17.24. The term is not in LSJ, but is clearly made up of two words χορός and νοῦς, a chorus of dancers and the Intellect. It is simultaneously a pun on χρόνος. It is impossible to capture all of this word-play in our translation. Festugière rightly compares with Proclus’ similar coinage at *in Crat.* 107, 59.5–6, where he etymologises Kronos as Koronous (Κορόνους), ‘since he is an immaterial and pure intellect, and one which establishes itself in the paternal silence’.

<sup>103</sup> There are some textual problems at the opening of this sentence. There is an ellipsis of two letters marked by Kroll before the sentence begins (18.1), and then after ‘In the seventh book of the *Republic*’ there is another lacuna of five letters (18.2). Also

we should think that what is fast and what is slow are circumscribed by time – and [Plato] says that that [true] number embraces them [both] – we would conclude from necessity that this number is time. And if we should think in addition that there is either time that is generated with the heavens or some kind [of time] before it, and [that time that is] generated with the heavens is a thing generated, but this other [time] is called by him ‘true number’, it is clear that we must set before that [generated time] that moves in accordance with number Number Itself, the true time before the engendered time. Therefore this [true] time is a hypercosmic god, and it is a number since it numbers all the cycles (*periodos*) of living things in the cosmos, and returns all things [to their starting points] in accordance with the measures connatural to itself. This is the one Perfect and true Number. Furthermore, there is another number for each generated divine being, as month to the Moon, year to the Sun, and similarly for all visible and invisible beings that are always living in the same way in accordance with their own psychic and corporeal cycles (*periodos*), whether they hold heavenly or sub-lunary ranks or some ranks in the air, in the water, or of the earth (*chthonios*).

There are in each part of the universe [certain divine and daemonic beings]<sup>104</sup> . . . but . . . in every number . . . If the [number] of the

the words ‘is called’ in the first sentence (18.1) and ‘named’ in the second sentence (18.2–3) are conjectures by Kroll:

17.24 (τῆς κατὰ κύκλον ἀποκαταστά-

18.1 σεως χορείας λεγ[ομένης]) .. ἐν τῷ ἐβδόμῳ τῆς Πολιτείας

18.2 ... Σωκράτης ἀληθινὸν ἀριθμὸν π[ρο-

18.3 σεῖπῳ]ν ἐν αὐτῷ φησιν εἶναι τὸ αὐτοτάχος καὶ τὴν αὐτο-

18.4 βραδυῆτα

The meaning of the sentence is not significantly affected by these problems. We have accepted the two conjectures by Kroll (‘is called’ and ‘named’), and have translated as if the two lacunae were not there. Kroll has suggested ὄν in 18.1 (‘being’), which has no effect on the meaning of the line. Festugière thought that the second lacuna (18.2) could be filled by an adverb, and suggested either θεῖως (‘divinely’, ‘inspiredly’) or ὀρθῶς (‘rightly’) to express how Socrates named the number. This is purely speculative and so we leave out the adverb (if it is an adverb that is missing).

In the *Republic*, Socrates is comparing the beauty of the visible cosmos to that of the Intelligible, and (arguing that the latter is better) says that the visible planets are inferior in their speed (τάχος, 529d2) and slowness (βραδυτής, 529d2) in comparison to the true number and true figures (ἐν τῷ ἀληθινῷ ἀριθμῷ καὶ πᾶσι τοῖς ἀληθέσι σχήμασι, 529d2–3). Proclus is echoing these terms in his commentary.

<sup>104</sup> The text is corrupt at 18.24–19.1: ἔστι γὰρ ἐν ἐκάστη μοίρᾳ τοῦ παντός . . . (45 letters missing) . . . δὲ . . . (10 letters missing) . . . παντὶ τῷ ἀριθμῷ . . . (10 letters missing) . . . ἀποκαταστατικῷ θεοῦ γεννητοῦ [τ]ινος ἐκεῖνος ὁ τοῦ ἀνθρωπείου γεννητοῦ [ἀριθμ]ὸς. The words in the brackets in the translation are Festugière’s suggestion. Also, before the word ἀποκαταστατικῷ, Kroll conjectured εἰ γὰρ ὑποτέτακται. Festugière



19 generated human being is dependent upon the return of some gener-  
 ated divine being [to its starting point], then inasmuch as this number  
 is a distinctive property of human life and is concerned with measuring  
 this [life], and returns that life [to its original position],<sup>105</sup> it is not an  
 absolutely Perfect Number but, just as Plato says [546c7–d1], ‘it con-  
 5 trols better and worse births’.<sup>106</sup> And in fact this [number] precedes the  
 human cycles (*periodos*), since it controls them, and embraces the dif-  
 ferent measures of the life of the generated human, both its fertility  
 and infertility. We will discover later what this [number] is. For now  
 10 the number of the whole life of every generated divine being is one  
 and multiple, since it is the common property of the whole cosmos  
 and of each of the divine generated beings. At the same time let it be  
 called ‘perfect’ and ‘true’. It is true because it is intellective and perfect  
 because it is perfective. It is clear also that this [number] precedes all  
 15 soul since every soul performs its activities in time and, as Plato says in  
 the *Phaedrus* (247d1–e6), sees everything that it sees in time.<sup>107</sup> It is then  
 a kind of Divine Intellect since what is moved in accordance with this  
 [number] is a divine generated being.

substituted δὲ for γάρ on the grounds that one cannot determine the relationship between the sentences involved. We follow Festugière but stress that the words are highly conjectural. The idea behind whatever words Proclus might have written must be that the number or cycle belonging to each and every human being is determined by the larger cycle of the god each follows.

<sup>105</sup> Festugière (124 n. 2) is troubled by the word ἀποκαταστατικός, arguing that it cannot here mean ‘returning to the beginning point’. However, in the case of human beings, the return is that of the soul to the Intelligible after death or (failing that) to Hades and eventually rebirth. (The latter is an incomplete *apokatastasis*, which affords the soul another chance for complete return to its home.)

<sup>106</sup> Plato wrote: ‘This whole geometrical number controls such [a process], viz. better and worse births’ (σύμπας δὲ οὗτος ἀριθμὸς γεωμετρικός, τοιοῦτου κύριος, ἀμεινόνων τε καὶ χειρόνων γενέσεων, 546c6–d1). Proclus takes the number to be not the Perfect Number that controls the whole cosmos and its *apokatastasis* but rather the number that pertains to and controls the shorter human cycle within that larger cycle. Hence it is not absolutely (ἀπλῶς) perfect, but dependent on that Perfect Number.

<sup>107</sup> Proclus refers to Socrates’ speech about the soul following the gods in the *Phaedrus*. There Plato says that while the gods enjoy an unencumbered view of the Forms, each soul to its best ability receives the appropriate nourishment from their vision of the Forms (καὶ ἀπάσης ψυχῆς [sc. διάνοια from d1] ὅση ἂν μέλη τὸ προσήκον δέξασθαι, 247d2–3) and ‘seeing [the Forms] in time delights in what-is and contemplating true objects it is nourished and fares well until its circular revolution is carried around to the same point’ (ἰδοῦσα διὰ χρόνου τὸ ὄν ἀγαπᾷ τε καὶ θεωροῦσα τάληθῇ τρέφεται καὶ εὐπαθεῖ, ἕως ἂν κύκλῳ ἢ περιφορᾷ εἰς ταῦτόν περιενέγκῃ 247d3–5). Thus, Proclus emphasises the soul’s contemplation of reality within time and its circular return to a starting point. This psychic revolution has its own number that is embraced by the Perfect Number.



§17 <The duality of the number of the human cycle: 19.18–22.19>

We have said that it is necessary to think that the Perfect Number of every divine generated cycle is intellectual. But what must one call [the number] of the human cycle? It is clear that it is far from that [Perfect Number] and is no longer absolutely (*haplôs*) perfect, since it controls a two-fold generation (*genesis*), as [Plato] says,<sup>108</sup> better and worse ones, but one essentially united . . . and another united . . . It is in charge of the cycles of human birth (*genesis*), since it controls (as [Plato] says) two generations that are better or worse . . .<sup>109</sup> It is true that some unmoved cause of a cyclical activity (*kyklêsis*) must pre-exist anything that is sempiternally moved around [within that activity]. Thus since what is human and generated also has cycles, even if they are better or worse ones, there is something that measures these prior to the things measured in accordance with number. What measures them, is either some Prometheus<sup>110</sup> or even some other of the [gods] who accomplish [these things] under the direction of the god who is the one cause of every rebirth that exists both among those that are generated and divine and among those that are not divine.<sup>111</sup> For every temporal series (*seira*) depends upon that one god, as [the series] measures over and over again the return of each thing to its one and the same starting point.<sup>112</sup> Thus I say that it is necessary to examine the number which has control over the better and worse cycles of the generated human being not only [as that number manifests] in the souls themselves as they make their cycles and as they are allotted (*syntelein*) into the

<sup>108</sup> *Rep.* 546c7–d. See above in the previous section 19.3–5.

<sup>109</sup> There are three lacunae in these lines: the first of seven letters, the second of fifty, and the third of nine.

<sup>110</sup> Proclus will mention Prometheus ('Forethought') and Epimetheus ('Afterthought') later at 53.6–8, where of Prometheus Proclus writes: 'whom Plato in the *Protagoras* says is the guardian of human life just as Epimetheus [is] of the irrational [life].' Kroll compares *in Tim.* III.346.14–16, where Proclus compares the intellectual person to one who has freed his Prometheus, whom Epimetheus had made a prisoner; thus an intellectual person moves from the irrational (Epimetheus) to the rational (Prometheus). See Tarrant's notes 674 and 675 on p. 238 of his translation. (Note that there is a typo in his reference to *in Remp.* II.53. He has '63' instead of '53'.) Here in the present passage (*in Remp.* II.20.1–3) Proclus, however, is using the mythic figure Prometheus to represent not the human rational nature but rather the Intellect (which exists before rational thought or *logismos*) as the presider over the human generative number.

<sup>111</sup> The two disjuncts then concern what controls the number of human generation. This would be either the Transcendent Intellect itself or some other lower deity acting on Intellect's behalf.

<sup>112</sup> The Greek word is ὅρος, literally the 'limit' or 'boundary' of an extended space. Here the ὅρος of the ἀποκατάστασις ('return') is its starting point. The term appears again in the same sense below at II.20.20.

generated human being, nor in fate (*heimarmenê*) alone, but to examine before these things the number in itself, and then [how it manifests] in fate and in souls. For, the better and worse [aspects of] the births are interwoven from the quality of the souls' lives and from the fated cycles (*periodos*). If destiny determines<sup>113</sup> the cause of both good and bad births and if this double number is the paradigm for both [good and bad births], then [the process] would entirely be in the hands of destiny. And rightly so, since [destiny] controls the number of every birth, divine and human.<sup>114</sup> Or how else does it return the cosmos to its appropriate starting points, since it is the cause of motion for encosmic beings with both short and long cycles.<sup>115</sup> But it is necessary that this [number] also be in the souls themselves that enter into the human race and cause them to live.<sup>116</sup> For they live as self-moved beings, and not only are they moved in a cycle by fate (*heimarmenê*), just as it is said that [animals] are driven to pasture,<sup>117</sup> but they also move themselves in a cycle.<sup>118</sup> The life-causing number [of the soul] therefore moves in cycles of better or worse kinds.<sup>119</sup> Since each soul is bi-formed (*duoeidês*),

<sup>113</sup> The Greek verb is περιέχει, 'embrace' or 'encompass'.

<sup>114</sup> The text of this sentence is uncertain. We follow that printed by Kroll.

<sup>115</sup> For the Greek term βραχυπόρος ('with a short orbit or cycle'), see Plato *Rep.* VIII.546a7, where Plato uses the term for human beings and animals on the earth in the context of the correct time for births in the ideal *polis*: 'Not only for plants in the earth but also among animals on the earth there are times of fertility and infertility of soul and of bodies, whenever the orbits of the cycles of each of them complete their circuits, the short-lived ones [complete] short orbits and the opposites opposite ones' (οὐ μόνον φυτοῖς ἐγγεῖοις, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν ἐπιγείοις ζώοις φορά καὶ ἀφορία ψυχῆς τε καὶ σωμάτων γίνονται, ὅταν περιτροπῇ ἐκάστοις κύκλων περιφοράς συνάπτωσι, βραχυβίοις μὲν βραχυπόρους, ἐναντίοις δὲ ἐναντίας 546a4–7).

<sup>116</sup> Kroll believes that ζωτικῆς is corrupt and suggested the adverb ζωτικῶς ('in such a way as to cause life'). This substitution is unnecessary.

<sup>117</sup> See Heraclitus, Fragment 11 (Diels-Kranz): 'For every animal is driven to pasture by a blow' (πᾶν γὰρ ἐρπετὸν πληγῇ νέμεται).

<sup>118</sup> 'Moved in a cycle' translates περιάγονται, while 'move themselves in a cycle' translates αὐτὰς περιάγουσιν. The verb normally indicates orbital motion, but is applied here to the cycles of life of the soul. Souls are both moved by destiny and move themselves, hence their number is 'double' (διπλοῦς, 20.16).

<sup>119</sup> We accept Schöll's addition of περιόδων after περιοδικῶς. Festugière translates the sentence with 'soul' as its subject: 'Chaque âme est donc un nombre vital qui se meut selon des périodes, des périodes ou meilleures ou pires.' We prefer to avoid calling the soul a number. Rather, as it seems to us, the number (which is Intellectual) controls the double functioning of the soul, causing the soul to return to its original starting point at the end of its cycle. Proclus may have in mind the 10,000-year cycle of the *Phaedrus*, when the soul returns to the Intelligible before descending again. Every soul must return and descend again (destiny) but what abilities it takes in its descent are up to the soul's training in the previous cycles of rebirth. Proclus alludes to the 10,000-year cycle below at 21.19.

[being made up of] the Circle of the Same and of the Different, it has in accordance with the Circle of the Same the greater harmony and in accordance with the Circle of the Other the inferior one. For the soul is never outside all harmony (for it would then be deprived of its very essence, which consists of harmonic ratios), but nevertheless it receives a greater and an inferior harmony, and sometimes it brings forth the number of the former and at other times of the latter. Just as we do not comprehend the number of the divine cycles in their quantity (because [the quantity] is innumerable) but from its quality, we said that it was perfect because it was perfective (*telesiourgos*) [of others],<sup>120</sup> thus also if we make [the number] of the human [cycle] double, we will not understand it in accordance with its quantity, but in accordance with the kind of life, whether it is perfect or imperfect, whether it makes things the same or makes them different,<sup>121</sup> whether it brings about reversion to its source (*epistreptikos*) or is generation-producing (*genesiourgos*). The number 10,000, which is the greater harmony and arises from the monad which belongs to the tertiary sequence<sup>122</sup> after having reverted itself back to itself,<sup>123</sup> is productive of return (*apokatastatikos*) and perfection (*telesiourgos*) of the soul, leading the fallen soul back up to that place again from where it has come here, just as Socrates said in the *Phaedrus*.<sup>124</sup> For the monad belongs to Zeus and embraces all the universe in a uni-form manner (*monoeidôs*). The decad belongs to Dionysus, whom his father in the tenth month brought to birth as the cause of every return (*apokatastasis*). The hecatontad belongs to the souls themselves that are engendered from the decad that enters into itself. If you wish, the monad, being unitary (*benoeidês*), is also [the

<sup>120</sup> Or alternatively 'it was complete because it tended to complete [others]'. The point is that the divine number, although unquantifiable, is perfect/complete because it perfects/completes the cycles of everything in the cosmos.

<sup>121</sup> ταῦτοποίησιν καὶ ἑτεροποίησιν: In Proclus' *Timaeus* commentary the former term ('makes things the same') is associated with the Circle of the Same in the soul (and therefore is deemed more appropriate to ascending to Intellect), while the latter term is associated with the Circle of the Different. See Proclus, in *Tim.* II.252.29–253.1, where Proclus again considers the soul's 'double powers, intellectual and doxastic' (τὰς διττὰς δυνάμεις, τὴν τε διανοητικὴν καὶ τὴν δοξαστικὴν 252.30–1) and connects them to the two psychic circles (253.1–7). Cf. III.256.4–29, III.262.3–15, and III.338.26–339.2.

<sup>122</sup> That is, from the number 100 (the Hecatontad). See Iamblichus, *De Nic. Arith.* 88.24–5 and 103.19–20.

<sup>123</sup> The individual soul reverts to itself and so may reunite with the Intellect. This ability to revert is a gift from the Intellect (decad) through the World Soul (hecatontad) and completes the soul, making it a myriad (which is therefore a greater harmony within the soul).

<sup>124</sup> *Phdr.* 248e5–6: 'For each soul does not return into the place from which it comes for 10,000 years' (εἰς μὲν γὰρ τὸ αὐτὸ θένει ἡ ψυχὴ ἐκάστη οὐκ ἀφικνεῖται ἐτῶν μυρίων). For the cyclic return, see Proclus, *ET* propositions 198–9.

image]<sup>125</sup> of the first principle of all things; the decad [is the image] of the intellectual cause, which having turned itself back to itself after its procession, is the decad; and the psychic hecatontad furthermore, as the Monad in the tertiary sequence is also from both. After it has turned itself back to itself, it establishes a [form of] life that spontaneously returns to its first principle and for this reason the myriad brings about the soul's return (*apokatastatikos*).<sup>126</sup>

The other number (the one that arises from the hecatontad multiplied by seventy five) is itself also a kind of activity of the soul (for the monad belonging to the tertiary sequence remains [what it is]) but [it is an activity of a soul] that falls to the worse since it had not been able to converge into itself. It is deficient by the number from the pentad, which the Pythagoreans call 'the temple of justice'.<sup>127</sup> This number, by falling short in its form of independent action, is an image of a life that goes out into the realm of generation. The Circle of the Different, in projecting this life, makes the whole cycle of our life be centred on the works of generation (*genesourgōs*) instead of being intellectual, making it be concerned with the affairs of others instead of reverting to itself. Therefore since the number of the human cycle is bi-form (*duoeidēs*), in line both with its destined procreation and with the soul's form of life, one must seize the appropriate time that is capable of bringing forth

<sup>125</sup> The word is missing in the MS. Diels suggested εἰκὼν ('image') while Holste and Allatios offered αἰτία ('cause'), which seems wrong.

<sup>126</sup> The echoing in the original Greek is difficult to capture in translation: ὁφίστησιν αὕτη ζῶν αὐτενεργήτως ἀποκαταστατικὴν εἰς τὴν ἀρχὴν, καὶ διὰ τοῦτο ἡ μυριάς ἀποκαταστατικὴ ψυχῆς ἐστίν (22.3–5), where the first instance of ἀποκαταστατικὴ reinforces the second. The psychic life (the hecatontad) spawned by the decad is *apokatastatic* to the soul's beginning and so the myriad is similarly *apokatastatic* for the soul. Just as the decad (Intellect) reverts to the monad (the One) in order to become what it is (the separate decad or Intellectual Principle), the hecatontad (Soul) reverts to its source and individual souls (myriads) do the same. The myriad is an image of the reverting hecatontad.

<sup>127</sup> The participle λείπων bears the meaning 'what is lacking'. Here it takes the dative 'number', and the number 2500 must be understood, which is  $5 \times 5 \times 100$ , and hence a pentadic number.  $10,000 - 2,500 = 7,500$  (referred to in lines 5–6, above). Thus a soul that fails to turn to itself (becoming a myriad), misses the mark by the pentadic number (the number of justice) and so (lacking the virtue of justice) falls into the realm of generation. For the Pythagorean dictum, see with Kroll and Festugière, *Theol. Arith.* 35.6–7 de Falco: ὅτι τῆς δικαιοσύνης ἐμφαντικωτάτη ἡ πεντάς, 'because the pentad is most expressive of justice.' See also (with Festugière) Proclus' statement below (93.17–18) ἡ μὲν πεμπάς, οὕσα μέση τῆς ἐννεάδος καὶ μονάδος, ἱερὰ λέγεται τῆς δίκης, 'The pentad, since it is the mean between the ennead and the monad, is called "the temple of justice"'.

both types of souls, the better and the worse, and effect couplings in the better of these moments.

§§18–34 <Notes on previous thinkers relevant to the Platonic text: 22.20–36.2><sup>128</sup>

§§18–19 <*Cronius*: 22.20–23.13>

§18. Cronius,<sup>129</sup> having taken a stand against those who maintain the destruction of the cosmos<sup>130</sup> and those who understand ‘generated’ as appropriate to things that are destructible, says ‘They are fools who did not observe that the powers opposed to fire are a worthy match for it’. He says too that fire does not destroy everything, not the linen-like strands from the stone of Carystus.<sup>131</sup> He also says that the divine fire is inimical to the fire near us, for a thunderbolt does not hew down into a house in which there is a fire or where a sealskin is laid out.<sup>132</sup> Fire scarcely destroys the rest, as it flees the sea in which there are seals. Neither does the thunderbolt hew down on laurel, for which reason the myth relates that Apollo fled Daphne.<sup>133</sup>

<sup>128</sup> The following discussion is somewhat piecemeal. Proclus explains views of his predecessors that have *some sort* of connection to the understanding of the nuptial number. But the connections are not always obvious and the order of presentation is not very systematic. In our notes to each section, we will try to make clear how these remarks connect to the sustained interpretation of the Platonic text that follows in §§35–41.

<sup>129</sup> Cronius (2nd century C.E.) was a Neopythagorean philosopher. See Dillon (1977), 379–80. Cronius’ fragments are collected by Leemans (1937). This report of his anti-Stoic views does not seem directly relevant to the interpretation of Plato’s text. It simply attempts to rule out the idea that any cosmic cycle must be one punctuated by a Stoic conflagration.

<sup>130</sup> The Stoics, some of whom championed the periodic conflagration of the cosmos. The fire into which these Stoics supposed the cosmos to be dissolved is sometimes equated with the designing or divine fire that they identified with Zeus. See line 25 below and Long and Sedley §46.

<sup>131</sup> I.e., asbestos. See Plutarch *de Def. Orac.* 434ab, where he discusses ‘the stone in Carystus that bears soft, fibrous filaments of linen-like strands’ (ἡ δ’ ἐν Καρύστῳ πέτρα χρόνος . . . μηρύματα λίθων μαλακά <καί> νηματώδη συνεκφέρουσα). Carystus was a *polis* on the southern coast of Euboea.

<sup>132</sup> For lightning not striking sealskins, see (with Kroll) Pliny, *Nat.* 2.146, Lydus, *Ost.* 99.5–8, and *Geoponica* 1.14.5. Cf. Plutarch *Moralia Table Talk* IV.664CD.

<sup>133</sup> In Greek and Roman myth, Apollo attempted to rape the nymph Daphne. To avoid this fate, her father Peneus turned her into a laurel tree. See Ovid, *Metam.* 1.452–567. For laurel being impervious to fire, see Pliny, *Nat.* 2.146. Cronius evidently explained Apollo’s retreat from the tree through the supposed fact that fire could not harm laurel.

§19. Cronius interprets the ‘two harmonies’<sup>134</sup> and says that the 10,000 [myriad] is in accord with male and the 7,500 with the female. He says that it is necessary for the male to be joined together with the female in accordance with the ratio of these [numbers], as also the soul  
 10 with the body. For the ratio of these is as the male to the female. The harmonious convergence of these and those [numbers] (‘harmonious’ as being in accord with the musical ratio) creates good fertility, but dissonant [convergence creates] infertility and unmusical<sup>135</sup> offspring.

§20 <Demetrius the geometer: 23.14–22>  
 15 Demetrius the geometer, the teacher of Porphyry,<sup>136</sup> leads all things into a pairing of likes and says that it is shown from numbers that in nature the worse holds sway in proportion to the mixture of unlikes [in anything]. For odd numbers produce<sup>137</sup> odd numbers, and the worse [numbers]<sup>138</sup> give birth to the opposite, viz. the even. For the even is  
 20 from the even. And those from both [the odd and the even] are likened to the worse. For the even is from the even and the odd. And so [he says] that number is indicative of the proclivity, in the pairing of what is good and what is not good, toward the worse.

§21 <Sosigines: 23.23–24.5>  
 Sosigenes<sup>139</sup> concluded that the perfect year arises from the myriads: from 34 of the myriad taken four times; 43\*\*\* [of the myriad] cubed,  
 25 7,876 [of the myriad] squared, and 3,836 of the myriad taken once, and

<sup>134</sup> The ‘two harmonies’ relate directly to *Rep.* VIII.546c2, in the context of the Perfect Number for the birth of the guardians. So this report on Cronius connects much more directly to Plato’s text than did the previous one.

<sup>135</sup> Or ‘uncultured’ (ἄμουσος).

<sup>136</sup> Although Festugière writes that this is the only known reference to Demetrius, he is also mentioned in Porphyry fr. 408F.1–5 (= Eusebius, *Præp. Evang.* X.3.1–4), where Porphyry says that ‘Demetrius the geometer’ was present at a feast in honor of Plato hosted by Longinus. Demetrius is therefore a contemporary of Porphyry in the third century C.E.

<sup>137</sup> Literally ‘give birth to’ (τίκτουσι, 23.18). As Festugière notes, multiplication is the underlying notion here. The product of two even numbers is an even number; that of two odd numbers is odd; and that of an odd and an even number is even. Demetrius imagines the odd as better than the even, and so a mixture of the two (in multiplication) makes something worse than or inferior to the original ‘good’ odd number.

<sup>138</sup> I.e. even numbers.

<sup>139</sup> Sosigenes the Peripatetic was the teacher of Alexander of Aphrodisias (Alexander, *In Meteor.* 143.13–14 and Themistius, *In De An.* 61.22–3). Themistius, *In De An.* 61.23, says that he wrote a work ‘On Vision’ (Περὶ ὄψεως), in which he discussed luminescent bodies of animals.

a further \*\*\* years.<sup>140</sup> He obtained this [number] from the joint returnings (*sunapokatastasis*) of the seven spheres. For after he had taken precise account of the returning (*apokatastasis*) of one and another [of the spheres], he discovered the [number] measured out by them. Then he added a third [sphere] and so on, and thus discovered the [universal cycle] of them all. And so some have also recorded predictions not only for Jupiter with its 12-year cycle but also for Saturn and Jupiter, since each [of these two spheres] accomplishes different results in accordance with its own cycle and in accordance with that of some other sphere or spheres.

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§22 <Dercyllides: 24.6–15>

Dercyllides<sup>141</sup> states that the reason that the universe never collapses on itself is that the cycle (*peridos*) of its divine body begins and ends in the same place. Thus [he says] the wand does not fall when it is moving

<sup>140</sup> The two ellipses in this passage make it difficult to know with certainty the number that Sosigenes assigned to the Great Year. Because of the first ellipsis, we do not know what numbers figured in the place of the tens and ones after 43. Because of the second, we do not know how Sosigenes' huge number finished. According to Kroll, the latter number was either 609 or 680. Inspection of the digitised manuscript from the Vatican leaves us with only admiration for Kroll's sharp eyes.

The number (whichever it was) becomes part of the complex expression in the system of myriads for conveying the number of the perfect year. (For the nature and history of the system of myriads, see Hultsch's Appendix I in Kroll.) Festugière (129 n. 1), following Hultsch, gives the total figure (with missing digits) this way:

$$344\ 3\ \dots\ 787\ 638\ 360\ 000$$

Zlatev (2016) inserts the missing digits (x and y) in the following equation:

$$N(x, y) = 344\ 300\ 787\ 638\ 360\ 600 + 10^{12}x + y \text{ ('where } x \text{ is two-digit integer not containing any zeros, and } y \text{ equals 9 or } 70\text{' (Zlatev (2016), 192)}$$

Mendel (n. d.) gives the number as:

$$344\ 341\ 787\ 638\ 360\ 670$$

If this is correct, it is the number of years that transpire between the beginning and the end of the *synapokatastasis* of all the planets. The exact number may never be known, but one can see that it is large and somehow takes in all the *apokatastaseis* of the seven planets, both individually and in groups, as is indicated in the remainder of this section.

<sup>141</sup> Dercyllides, a philosopher of the first century B.C.E. or C.E., wrote on Platonic philosophy. Porphyry fr. 46F.2–4 Smith (= Simplicius, *In Phys.* 247.30, ff.) referred to the 11th book of his *Platonic Philosophy*. Proclus, in *Tim.* I.20.9–11 reported that Dercyllides thought that the missing fourth guest in that dialogue was Plato himself. Albinus (*Eisag.* 149.5–13), said that he divided Plato's dialogues into tetralogies. Like the report of Cronius in §18 above, this remark seems to be directed at Stoic opponents who suppose that the completion of a world cycle results in the destruction of the cosmos.

10 around on the finger as long as it is being spun around, nor does the  
 hoop that is rolling along the ground. When they stop [rotating], they  
 fall immediately. If the stars come to a halt as they are making their joint  
 returns (*sunapokatastantes*) to the same one point, they will undergo the  
 same thing. But as it is, their end point (*peras*) becomes the beginning  
 15 of another cycle, and their joint return (*sunapokatastasis*), inasmuch as it  
 is not a halt but a starting point of the next cycle (*periodos*), maintains  
 the cosmic arrangement.

§23 <Pythagoreans: 24.16–25.13>

The Pythagoreans have shown through numbers that the rational [diag-  
 onals] that approximate to the irrational diagonals are greater or lesser  
 than double [the side] by a unit.<sup>142</sup> For since the unit is all things in the

<sup>142</sup> Proclus now illustrates some side- and diameter-numbers in ways that closely follow the presentation in Theon of Smyrna 42.10–44.17 (Hiller), trans. in Thomas (1939), 134–7. What is at issue is an approximation of the ratio of the side of a square to its irrational diagonal (or of sides of an isosceles triangle to its diagonal). This notion of a ‘rational diagonal’ that approximates the actual irrational value of the diagonal emerges in Plato’s instruction (546c4–6) where we are told that ‘One of its sides is one hundred squares of the *rational diameter* of five diminished by one each or one hundred squares of the *irrational diameter* diminished by two each’. The ‘rational diameter’ of 5 is the rational number close to the real length of the diagonal of a square whose sides are five (or of an isosceles right triangle whose legs are 5). That is to say, ‘the rational diameter’ is a suitable approximation for  $\sqrt{50}$ .

Proclus and Theon both illustrate the discovery of such rational diameters for *some* values. Does Proclus subsequently attribute to the Pythagoreans a rigorous inductive derivation of side- and diagonal numbers that can fairly be regarded as an inductive proof? That is one way to interpret Proclus’ remark below at 27.11–18 where he seems to connect what he calls the Pythagoreans’ ‘elegant theorem’ with a proof of Euclid in *Elements*. Heath (1921), vol. 1, 92 thought so and explained the idea in modern notation as follows:

Consequently we begin with two units, the one being the first *side*, which we will call  $a_1$ , the other being the first *diameter*, which we will call  $d_1$ . The second side and diameter ( $a_2, d_2$ ) are formed from the first; the third side and diameter ( $a_3, d_3$ ) from the second, and so on, as follows :

$$\begin{array}{ll} a_2 = a_1 + d_1 & d_2 = 2a_1 + d_1, \\ a_3 = a_2 + d_2 & d_3 = 2a_2 + d_2 \\ \dots & \\ a_{n+1} = a_n + d_n & d_{n+1} = 2a_n + d_n. \end{array}$$

and so on. Theon states, with reference to these numbers, the general proposition that

$$d_n^2 = 2a_n^2 \pm 1.$$

But Heath’s optimism was questioned by Knorr (1998) and others who argued that there was no good reason to connect a subsequent passage in Euclid cited by



manner corresponding to a seed (*spermatikôs*), they say it is evident that it is both sides and diagonal too.<sup>143</sup> So let there be two units: one for the sides and the other for the diagonal. Add to the unit that serves for the side a single [unit that measures the] diagonal, and add to the unit that serves for the diagonal two [of the units that measure the] sides, since the one for the diagonal is less than double that for the side by one unit. Thus one [sc. the new side] will be composed of two units, while the other [sc. the diagonal] will be composed of three. The [squares] that result from these are, in the first case, four, and in the other case nine, which is greater than the double [of four] by one unit. Again, let there be added to the two [units of the side] a single diagonal of three [units], but to the diagonal of three let there be added twice the side that is two. Therefore, the side will be five of them, but the diagonal will be seven of them. The [squares] that result from these will be 25 and 49, respectively, [the latter] being one unit less than the double [of the former]. It was by virtue of this that Plato said that 48 is the number that results from the rational diagonal of [a square with the side] 50 minus one [i.e. 49–1] and of the irrational diagonal minus two, since the square of the diagonal is double that of the side. And if we take all the [squares], each of which derives from diagonals like these, they will actually be double, since they are greater or smaller than double [the side] by one unit. For instance, 9 and 49 in relation to 25 and 4.<sup>144</sup> For these reasons the Pythagoreans had confidence in their method.

§24 <The school of Dercyllides: 25.14–26>

The school of Dercyllides says that the triangle itself is like the initial guardians due to the communion of ratios.<sup>145</sup> While [the sides]

Proclus with the Pythagoreans' approximating of irrational diameters for at least some instances of squares. It is beyond our competence to adjudicate these complex issues in the history of mathematics. We have simply translated the text in a manner that we hope is as neutral as possible and advise readers that there are deep and difficult debates around this and the following passage at 27.11–18.

The literature on the history of side- and diameter-numbers is extensive. In addition to Heath see Herz-Fischler (1998), 48–9; Vedova (1951).

<sup>143</sup> Proclus' appeal to the seed-like character of the unit as the basis for the insistence that it must be found in both the side and the diagonal echoes the reasoning in Theon of Smyrna: *De util.* 43.5–8 ὥσπερ οὖν πάντων τῶν σχημάτων κατὰ τὸν ἀνωτάτω καὶ σπερματικὸν λόγον ἡ μονὰς ἄρχει, οὕτως καὶ τῆς διαμέτρου καὶ τῆς πλευρᾶς λόγος ἐν τῇ μονάδι εὐρίσκεται.

<sup>144</sup> I.e.  $9 = (4 \times 2) + 1$ ,  $49 = (25 \times 2) - 1$ .

<sup>145</sup> The thought seems to be that the 3–4–5 triangle exhibits a communion or sharing of ratios that is in some way analogous to the communion of partners and property that is characteristic of the guardians – at least in their initial condition before disharmony arises among them as a consequence of the miscalculation of the nuptial number.

surrounding [the right angle] have the primary ratio of concord (*sympbhōnia*), the square of the hypotenuse [is equal to the sum of the squares of] both [legs].<sup>146</sup> The fourth-ranked numbers that result from multiplying these [three] three times<sup>147</sup> resemble [the guardians] of the fourth [kind].<sup>148</sup> Among these one is a friend to Likeness (i.e. 100), while the other is a friend to Unlikeness (i.e. 75). One generates another such [Like or Similar] number [when multiplied by 100] (i.e. 10,000), while the other generates [another number that is also Unlike or Dissimilar] when the 75 is multiplied by 100 (i.e. 7,500). The first is a cause of fertility (*eugonia*) since it pairs like <with like> for reproductive purposes, while the other is a cause of sterility which pairs unlikeness \*\*\*12\*\*\* These are examples of the combination (*synaphê*) of things that are alike with those that are unlike which, when it is overlooked by the rulers, destroys the constitution.

<sup>146</sup> This seems to assume that the triangle itself is represented by the 3–4–5 right-triangle. In this case, the ratio of the *epitritos* or 4:3, corresponding to the musical fourth, obtains between the two legs. The second similarity involves slightly more guesswork. Proclus' text is pretty elliptical (τῆς δ' ὑποτεινούσης τῇ δυναμένης ἀφοῖν-), but it is difficult to see what else the 'school of Dercyllides' could have had in mind. It does rather break the theme of Pythagorean harmonies begun by the finding of the musical fourth between the two legs of the triangle itself.

Proclus, like Dercyllides, takes the 3–4–5 triangle to be involved in the nuptial number, but he finds the musical ratios in it differently (42.15–21 below). Like Dercyllides, he takes the musical fourth (4:3) to be conveyed by the sides, but the octave (2:1) is given in the ratio of the area (6) to the perimeter (12), and the musical fifth (3:2) by the area (6) to the longer leg (4). The ratio of the tone (9:8) is derived by adding each leg to the hypotenuse, i.e. (4+5) : (3+5).

<sup>147</sup> Festugière proposes that what Proclus here attributes to the followers of Dercyllides is a process in which the sides of the 3–4–5 triangle are multiplied to yield 60. This is then 'raised to the fourth rank'. That is to say, 60<sup>4</sup>, which is equivalent to the figure that Diès and Adam took to be Plato's cosmic number: 12,960,000. He goes on to observe that one can also present 60<sup>4</sup> as (5x5x5) x (3x4x5) x (3x3x4) x (3x4x4). In this case, 5<sup>3</sup> is *similar* cubic number, while the other numbers are *dissimilar*, i.e. made up of different numbers. Proclus' own solution to the riddle of Plato's number involves the use of such similar and dissimilar cubes, but it is unclear to us that one should attribute either Diès' and Adam's identification with the cosmic number as 60<sup>4</sup> to Dercyllides or to suppose that Proclus' use of the notion of similar and dissimilar cubes aligns with Dercyllides' deployment of this common terminology. Proclus' report is just too brief and the text too lacunose.

<sup>148</sup> It is by no means clear, but it seems probable that Proclus has in mind here the psychically defective guardians that Socrates' Muses assimilate to the Hesiodic races of iron and bronze – the fourth presumably being the iron. At 547a2–3, this mixing 'gives birth to unlikeness and discordant lack of fit' (ἀνομοιότης ἐγγενήσεται καὶ ἀνωμαλία ἀνάρμοστος). In view of the emphasis the report on Dercyllides places on likeness and unlikeness, this seems to be the most apposite Platonic passage and it, in turn, suggests that 'the fourth' here relates to the iron race.

## §25 &lt;Nikolas and Magnus : 25.27–26.14&gt;

It is also the case that Nikolas and Magnus the geometer, whose works Nikolas paraphrases, hold the same doctrine. They say that Plato utilises number as a paradigm for the transitions between constitutions and dedicates it to the Muses due to the honour surrounding votive offerings. He shows that, just as in the case of numbers, pairings of a certain character produce things that are like or unlike as a result, so too in the case of ways of life (*bios*). In addition, it is necessary that the rulers look to these matters in order that the offspring should remain similar to their parents, lest the political order degenerate through dissimilarity into some other order, and that similarity is coordinate with the good. He shows that it is necessary to take the number that belongs to the cycles, not as conjunctions that come about by fate, but as pairings that are beneficial in terms of the appropriate time for conjoining at the prime of life.<sup>149</sup> This consists in the opportune moment in the symmetry of marital relations in order that the creation of children happens at the prime of life.

## §26 &lt;Pythagoras: 26.15–25&gt;

It is on the basis of this triangle that Pythagoras<sup>150</sup> shows fertility (*eugonia*) of seven-month and nine-month pregnancies, but the defectiveness

<sup>149</sup> οὐχ ὥς καθ' εἰμαρμένην τῶν συνόδων γιγνομένων, ἀλλ' ὥς ὀφειλόντων τῶν συζευγνυμένων κατὰ τὴν προσήκουσαν ὥραν συζεύγνυσθαι τῆς ἡλικίας. The English translation cannot adequately capture the polysemy involved. συνόδων ('conjunctions') can have the sense of sexual intimacy as well as the astrological sense of conjunctions of planets (*inter alia*). συζευγνυμένων ('pairings') similarly has senses not so directly related to marriage either, though this is perhaps the principal sense.

<sup>150</sup> We find this verdict on the doomed eight-month child summed up pithily in the Hippocratic, *On Fleashes* 19.23–32 (see also the treatise *On the Eighth-Month Child* and §33, below):

The child born viable at seven months is born in phase (λογφ), and lives, and has the correct synchrony and precise numerical relationship to seven-day periods (λόγον ἔχει τοιοῦτον καὶ ἀριθμὸν ἀτρεκέα ἐς τὰς ἐβδομάδας). A child born at eight months never survives. At nine months and ten days a child is born and lives, and has a precise numerical relationship to seven-day periods.

$$4 \times 10 \times 7 = 280 \text{ days,} \\ \text{and } 10 \times 7 = 70 \text{ days.}$$

The child born at seven months counts exactly thirty seven-day periods:

$$10 \times 7 = 70 \text{ days}$$

and  $3 \times 10 \times 7 = 210$  days. (trans. Potter, *Hippocrates vol. 8*, LCL 482)

So a successful pregnancy can be made up of seven of one numerologically significant period (the forty-day one) or of seven instances of another numerologically significant

20 (pêrôsis) of the eight-month one, for its number belongs to the 'arrow-heads' [or angles] around the right angle. And they thus called the [angles] around the \*\*\* arrow-heads<sup>151</sup> \*\*\* 20 is 8 \*\*\* 9 \*\*\* for \*\*\* 6, simultaneously 35 \*\*\* seven-month \*\*\* and the 9<sup>152</sup> the arrow-heads of the acute [angles] \*\*\* the 12 is simultaneously the one concerned with right angle \*\*\* 7 and the *embadon*<sup>153</sup> which is 6, together with the triad of the number \*\*\* of the sides, for taking 2 three times \*\*\* which when summed together make 45, which multiplied by 6 <gives> a nine-month <pregnancy>.<sup>154</sup>

one (the thirty-day period). Proclus attributes this medical theory here to Pythagoras – not to Hippocrates or his followers. Burkert, however, noted that many of the numerological correspondences known as Pythagorean have their roots in common ideas of numbers in Greek culture. Burkert (1972), 476.

<sup>151</sup> There is a considerable gap in the text, but on the basis of *Def.* 15 from Heron of Alexandria, Heath explains the etymology of the Pythagorean term γλωχίς ('barb') thusly: 'An angle they called γλωχίς, a "point" (as of an arrow) made by a line broken or bent back at one point.' Heath (1921), vol. 1, 166.

<sup>152</sup> Reading ó θ' for οθ' in line 21. Nine is a number that fits with the presentation of similar Pythagorean material, while 79 is not. Our inspection of the digitised images of the Vatican manuscript leaves us no better informed. Indeed, we're surprised that Kroll was able to see as much as he did. Either seeing the manuscript in real life is much, much better or the stained pages have darkened even more since Kroll worked with it. Or perhaps Kroll just had the eyes of an eagle.

<sup>153</sup> An *embadon* is the sum of consecutive integers. See below 35.20 and 42.16–26. Examples include 3 (1+2), 6 (1+2+3) and 10 (1+2+3+4).

<sup>154</sup> We are reduced to guesswork by the state of the text. The fact that we can clearly make out the numbers 35 and 45, and the suggestion that we might multiply by 6 (ἐφ' ὅν ó 6) to get the period of nine months led Kroll to credit Proclus with the idea that if we multiply each number 35, 40 – which is of course absent from our lacunose text – and 45 by 6, we get the numbers associated with the three periods' days of gestation corresponding to the seven-, eight-, and nine-month pregnancy: 210, 240, 270.

Parker (2009) discusses a fragment plausibly attributed to the medical writer Damastes (fl. second century B.C.E.) that yields what is perhaps a more satisfying parallel than the Censorinus passage cited by Kroll. Parker's translation of Damastes on the seven- and nine-month child:

The seven-month child becomes foam in 6 days, becomes blood in 8, becomes flesh in another 9, takes shape in another 12. Women who are brought to this point complete the number 35. It moves in twice the number, 70, and when this number of days is done, it is born in three times the number, 210 ... The nine-month child becomes foam in 6 days, becomes blood in another 9, becomes flesh in another 12, takes shape in another 18. Women who are brought to this point complete the manifest number of 45. It moves in twice as many days as these, 90, and is born in three times the number, 270.

Damastes' presentation does not relate these time periods to the 3–4–5 triangle, but we can see how this could be done through Proclus' explanation of Empedocles' view at 35.15–18. The passage in Censorinus, by contrast, deals with the seven-month child and the *ten*-month child.

§27 <The Pythagoreans and Plato: 27.1–29.4>

Since it is impossible for the diagonal to be rational when the side is rational<sup>155</sup> (for there is no number squared that is twice a square – a fact that makes it clear that magnitude is incommensurable and that Epicurus incorrectly made the atom the measure of all bodies and Xenocrates incorrectly made the indivisible line the measure of all lines – the Pythagoreans and Plato contrived a way to say that when the sides are rational, the diagonal is not rational *simpliciter*, but rather lies in the squares of the double ratio which it is requisite for the diagonal to make, falling short or exceeding it by a unit – exceeding [by a unit] in the ratio of 4 to 9, but falling short in the ratio of 25 to 49). Such things being the case, the Pythagoreans put forward an elegant theorem concerning diagonals and sides: that the diagonal, with the addition of the side of which it is the diagonal, becomes the side [of a new figure], while the [original] side added to itself and with the addition of the [original] diagonal becomes the [new] diagonal of its own [figure].

This is shown graphically by him [sc. Euclid] in the second [book] of the *Elements*:<sup>156</sup> ‘If a straight line is bisected, and a straight line is added to it, the square on the whole line including the added straight line and the square on the latter by itself are together double of the square on the half and of the square on the straight line made up of the half and the added.’<sup>157</sup> Let there be a side AB and [a side] BC equal to it, and CD the diagonal of AB with double its square. On account of the theorem, the squares that result from AD together with DC are double those that result from AB and from BD. The square of DC is double that of

<sup>155</sup> In this section, Proclus returns to the theme of §24. Earlier he gave a brief outline of the method of sides and diagonals, attributing it to the Pythagoreans. The present text connects this explicitly to both Plato and to Euclid’s *Elements*. Here the method is called a theorem and is subjected to proofs (of a sort) in the form of a construction proof and then arithmetically.

<sup>156</sup> We opt for the traditional translation of this sentence, though alternatives are possible and would perhaps have different consequences for the debate about side- and diagonal numbers noted above at 26.16. See the discussion in Baloglou and Thomaidis (n.d.).

<sup>157</sup> Since it falls at the top of 43r in the Vatican’s badly maimed manuscript, the text here is lacunose and Kroll has filled in the gaps to make it a close approximation of the text of Euclid:

Proclus 27.18–22: ἐὰν εὐθεῖα τμηθῇ δίχα, προσλάβῃ δὲ εὐθεῖαν, τὸ ἀπὸ τῆς [ὅλης σὺν τῇ προσκειμένῃ] καὶ τὸ ἀπὸ [ταύτης] [μόνης τετραγώνω διπλάσια τοῦ τε ἀπὸ τῆς ἡμισείας καὶ τῆς τοῦ ἀπὸ] τῆς συγκεμένης ἐκ τῆς ἡμισείας καὶ τῆς προσληφθείσης.

Euclid II.10: Ἐὰν εὐθεῖα γραμμὴ τμηθῇ δίχα, προστεθῇ δὲ τις αὐτῇ εὐθεῖα ἐπ’ εὐθείας, τὸ ἀπὸ τῆς ὅλης σὺν τῇ προσκειμένῃ καὶ τὸ ἀπὸ τῆς προσκειμένης τὰ συναμφότερα τετραγώνω διπλάσιά ἐστι τοῦ τε ἀπὸ τῆς ἡμισείας καὶ τοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς συγκεμένης ἐκ τε τῆς ἡμισείας καὶ τῆς προσκειμένης ὥς ἀπὸ μιᾶς ἀναγραφέντος τετραγώνου.

5 AB. By subtraction, therefore, the square of AD is also double that of BD. For if whole is to whole as what is subtracted to what is subtracted, so also will the remainder be to the remainder as the whole is to the whole. Therefore the diagonal CD, including side BC, is a side, and AB, including BC and its diagonal CD, is a diagonal. For the square is double the side DB.

10 Let these things also be shown arithmetically by the following in the case of rational diagonals, which [when squared] we said were greater or smaller by a unit [than double the square of the side]. Let there be a unit [for the side], and alongside it let there be another unit [for the diagonal], which is also a side of its own. Wherefore, the one simply becomes one and makes a rational diagonal that is less by one than [twice] the square of the side; that is to say, [double] the square of itself.<sup>158</sup> For  
15 if you add a unit to the square of the diagonal, which is itself a unit, it becomes the double of the square of the unit taken as a side. Let us take, therefore, the unit for the diagonal [adding it to] the side, which is itself a unit (for it was also the diagonal). [The new side thus constructed] becomes 2 and the side [of a square] of 4. Take the unit for the side added to itself with another unit for the diagonal (for it was a unit for the  
20 diagonal). It becomes 3 and makes [the side of a square] of 9, which is larger by a unit than the square that results from the sides with length 2

<sup>158</sup> ἔστω μονάς, περὶ δὲ αὐτὴν ἔστω μονάς, <ῆ> καὶ πλευρά ἐστὶν ἑαυτῆς, διότι ἅπας τὸ ἐν γίνεται ἓν, καὶ διάμετρος ῥητὴ, μονάδι ποιοῦσα ἑλασσον τοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς πλευρᾶς, τοῦτ' ἐστὶν τοῦ ἁφ' ἑαυτῆς. This passage is so highly compressed that any literal translation must border on gibberish. Neither our translation, nor Festugière's French, can be said to be particularly lucid. The only author we have found to try to render all of §27 into English, just gives up and resorts to equations: '1+1=2 ... 5+7=12; 2.5+7=17; 172=289=2.122+1 and so on' see Herz-Fischler (1998), 49.

Contrast Proclus' text with the parallel step in Theon's presentation of the initial case in the construction of the sequence of pairs where  $d_n^2 - 2s_n^2 = \pm 1$ :

καὶ ἐπὶ μὲν τῆς πρώτης πλευρᾶς τε καὶ διαμέτρου εἴη ἂν τὸ ἀπὸ τῆς μονάδος διαμέτρου τετράγωνον μονάδι μῖξ ἑλαττον ἢ διπλάσιον τοῦ ἀπὸ τῆς μονάδος πλευρᾶς τετραγώνου· ἐν ἰσότητι γὰρ αἱ μονάδες· τὸ δ' ἐν τοῦ ἐνός μονάδι ἑλαττον ἢ διπλάσιον.  
*De Util. Math.* 43.15–19

Thomas (1939), p. 135 renders this passage as follows:

Now in the case of the first side and diameter the square on the unit diameter will be less by a unit than twice the square on the unit side; for the units are equal, and 1 is less by a unit than twice 1.

It is difficult to imagine that what Proclus now says would have been comprehensible to any audience not already very well versed in mathematics generally and in the method of sides and diagonals in particular. Even allowing for the difficulty of expressing what is effectively an algebraic equation in language that lacks semantic resources specifically constructed for this task, Proclus' explanation is terribly opaque.

(i.e. 8). Next, let us add to the side that is 2, the diagonal that is 3 which then becomes 5. Adding the 3 to the 2 taken twice yields 7. Now the square of 5 is 25, while the square of 7 is 49, which is 1 less than twice the square of 5. Let us likewise add 5 to 7 and 7 to 5 taken twice. The square of 12 (i.e. 5+7) is 144, while the square of 17 (i.e. (2x5)+7) is 289, which is one unit greater than 144 taken twice. And so on forever.

§§28–31 <Amelius: 29.5–32.9>

§28. Amelius<sup>159</sup> said with daemonic inspiration that virtue is two-fold. One sort lives internally as contemplative virtue, while the other lives externally as practical virtue. He says that the guardians have been called ‘wise’ (546a8) because of their contemplation [of Intelligible objects], but they are said to stumble because of their actions that take place by ‘reasoning combined with sensation’ (546b1) – inasmuch as [sensation is] a fallible criterion. Due to the former [i.e. contemplation] the guardians do not share in fate, but through the latter they live in conjunction with fate and interweave what is up to them with what is fated. Just as what is up to us cannot operate upon what is external without fate, so too in many cases neither does fate operate without what is up to us, for this too is a part of the cosmos. Fate (*heimarmenē*) [is

<sup>159</sup> Proclus’ collection of relevant points from earlier interpreters now skips from the details of the calculation of the nuptial number involving rational diagonals to the broader question of how the guardians manage to go wrong. This takes him to Amelius, who has played no role in Proclus’ commentary since some of his remarks on the virtues figured in Proclus’ interpretation of the arguments against Thrasyarchus discussed in Essay 3 (*in Remp.* I 24.7–11). We cannot know the source from which Proclus draws his information. Our evidence for Amelius and his works is too fraught for that. But there is a common theme of sorts linking the views here with the earlier report by Proclus. Earlier Proclus credited Amelius with the insight that a *greater* degree of personal injustice – that is to say, a more disordered soul – might lead to *fewer* acts of injustice. (The badly disordered soul is just too much of a shambolic mess to get anything done.) But a *lesser* degree of personal injustice might lead to *greater* acts of wickedness because this flawed agent at least possesses sufficient psychic harmony to put his misguided aims into action. Amelius’ contribution in this section seems to involve two notions. First, he distinguishes the theoretical and practical virtues of the guardians and credits their eventual failure in calculating the correct time for marriages to the latter. But, then, within the latter, we must distinguish reasoning from the sensation with which it is combined (546b1–2). While you might suppose that the guardians would be *less* likely to go wrong in the combined use of two cognitive faculties (reason and sensation), in fact they are *more* likely to go wrong in discerning the opportune moment for the marriages by virtue of combining the two. So both the reflections on virtue in Essay 3 and the remarks here somehow involve bringing the Platonic theme of ‘the more and the less’ into conversation with the concept of virtue. On Amelius and his works, see Brisson (1987) and more recently Baltzly (2018).



said to be] a chain (*beirmon*)<sup>160</sup> of particular and universal causes. Thus [Amelius said that] Plato brings the cause of what is up to us together with the cycle [of fate]. And since the discussion is about people who are wise [i.e. the guardians] he attributes their failure to attain [their goals] to their practical activities [and not their contemplative ones]. And in the case of these practical activities, [the failure arises from] sensory activities, not activities of reasoning. While the reasoning [faculty] in them has been educated, the [faculty of] perception has not (for that is not natural) and due to this fact [reasoning] produces an outcome that is less than optimal<sup>161</sup> due to the absence of accuracy and clarity in the senses, which Plato has often discredited, having demonstrated them [to be unsuited to the task].<sup>162</sup> In this passage (546a7–b2) he says that [the guardians] ‘will no longer succeed [in finding the proper times] for the fertility and infertility’ of the human race (for this is what the Muses mean by the phrase ‘your race’ since they are addressing human beings and prophesying the future dissolution of the best political order). Therefore [Plato uses] the phrase ‘they will no more succeed’ through ‘reasoning combined with sensation’ as if someone had assumed that the double understanding (*gnôsis*) [of reasoning *combined* with sensation] would double the chance of achieving that which is desired, for what they say means the opposite of this – that one is not *more*, but rather *less* likely to grasp the appropriate time [for fertility] through perception, for they will fall into error due to sensation and these things will happen even though the guardians are – because of their education – the most elevated people.

§29. Amelius interprets ‘divine and generated being’ in a manner contrary to expectations.<sup>163</sup> He does not regard it as the cosmos or the heavens like everyone else, but rather says that since the intelligible universe is a *god* (*theos*), while the celestial universe is *divine* (*theion*), he claims that the *sub-celestial universe* is referred to as ‘the divine *generated* being’, since he takes the term ‘generated’ strictly. [Amelius says that] the Perfect Number encompasses the cycle (*periodos*) of this world – i.e. the time in which the velocities of the eight circuits (*periodos*) reach their starting points – and encompasses the things down here which are encircled in the motion and circuit [of the eight], and when [the

<sup>160</sup> For a similar etymological linkage, see Proclus, *in Tim.* III 272.24 and *SVF* III 918.1.

<sup>161</sup> Reading ἀρ[τίου with Festugière rather than Kroll’s ἀπ[λοῦ.

<sup>162</sup> The manuscript is lacunose here. The text is διαβέβληκεν ἀποδεί . . . (followed by space for 14 letters). Kroll surmises that the missing text may be: διαβέβληκεν ἀποδεί<ξας ἀσυμμέτρους>, which we adopt here.

<sup>163</sup> The interpretive question is what to make of Plato’s words at *Rep.* 546b3–4 ἔστι δὲ θεῖον μὲν γεννητὸν περίοδος ἣν ἀριθμὸς περιλαμβάνει τέλειος. For Proclus’ own view of the way in which this phrase should be understood, see 14.8, ff. above.



eight] have been restored to their starting point,<sup>164</sup> [the things down here] take on the same figure and order [as they had before]. And he

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<sup>164</sup> Literally ‘. . . i.e. time, which is the velocities of the eight circuits as they reach their starting points’ (τὸν χρόνον, ὅς ἐστι τὰ τῶν ὀκτῶ περιόδων τάχῃ σχόντα κεφαλὴν, 2.30.11–12). There are two problems. First, time would seem to be the motion, not the velocities, of the heavenly spheres. This problem arises in the *Timaeus*, where Plato refers to the ‘Perfect Number of time’, which is the period during which the eight circuits of the planets and stars (which together make up the Circle of the Different) under the direction of the Circle of the Same complete their motions from beginning point around again to that same point, which marks the end of the complete period. Plato writes (*Tim.* 39d2–7):

It is nevertheless possible to comprehend that the Perfect Number of time completes the perfect year whenever the velocities of all eight circuits – after they have been simultaneously completed relative to one another and have been measured by the Circle of the Same that moves in the same manner – have reached their starting point. (ἔστιν δ’ ὅμως οὐδὲν ἥττον κατανοῆσαι δυνατὸν ὥς ὃ γε τέλος ἀριθμὸς χρόνου τὸν τέλεον ἐνιαυτὸν πληροῖ τότε, ὅταν ἀπάσων τῶν ὀκτῶ περιόδων τὰ πρὸς ἀλλήλα συμπερανθέντα τάχῃ σχῇ κεφαλὴν τῷ τοῦ ταύτου καὶ ὁμοίως ἰόντος ἀναμετρηθέντα κύκλῳ.)

Plato, like Proclus, uses the term ‘velocities’ (τάχῃ) in a manner that indicates both the speed of the motion and the motion itself, forming a sort of synecdoche, in which ‘velocities’ stands for both: ‘their swift motions.’ Thus, it is best to see Proclus’ use of the term ‘velocities’ as taking on a double meaning, both the speeds with which the spheres complete their cycles and by an extension of meaning to the motion of the spheres as they speed along.

Second, there is the meaning of the phrase σχόντα κεφαλὴν (30.12). Proclus is thinking of Plato, *Tim.* 39d5–6 σχῇ κεφαλὴν (in the passage translated above). For the difficult phrase, see Taylor (1928), 219–20. The Greek word κεφαλὴ means ‘head’, and comes to include the meanings ‘source, origin’ as well as ‘starting point’. See LSJ II.d. We can see this meaning in the *Timaeus*. Proclus in his *Timaeus Commentary* (III 92.24–8) uses the term in a discussion of the Perfect Number of the *Timaeus*. The Perfect Number in that dialogue is contained in or encompassed by the Circle of the Same (as Plato says too), which is the eternal source of encosmic time. Proclus explains that encosmic time imitates the eternity of the Circle of the Same but extends it in time (ὁ δὲ χρόνος μετὰ παρατάσεως, 92.21–2). He writes that this encosmic time:

. . . measures the single life of the universe, in accordance with which [life] all the velocities of the heavenly and sublunary spheres are jointly accomplished . . . [the velocities] having as their starting point the Circle of the Same. (μετρεῖ δὴ οὖν ὁ ὅλος χρόνος ὁ ἐγκόσμιος τὴν μίαν ζωὴν τοῦ παντός, καθ’ ἣν πάντα συμπεραίνεται τὰ τάχῃ τῶν κύκλων τῶν τε οὐρανίων καὶ τῶν ὑπὸ σελήνην . . . ἔχοντα κεφαλὴν τὴν ταύτου φοράν’ 92.24–6 and 27–8.)

Here – as in the *Timaeus*, our passage in the *Timaeus Commentary*, and in the *Republic Commentary* – the use of ‘velocities’ (τάχῃ) is double, since it is not the speed of the spheres that is at issue but rather their motions or orbits. Again it is best to see a double usage for both speed and motion. Encosmic time measures the whole cycle of all the eight spheres from the beginning of those motions until the end (when all the spheres return to the same starting point (κεφαλὴ) at which they began). See also Baltzly’s notes in his translation of the *Timaeus Commentary* (Baltzly 2013, vol. 5, 169 n. 367 and 171 n. 375).

seems to understand the Perfect Number consistently with what is said in the *Timaeus*. For there he called the ‘Perfect Number of time’ (*Tim.* 39d3–4) the number [arising] from the joint return of the eight circuits (*periodos*), whenever the velocities of all of these – after they have simultaneously completed [their cycles] – have reached their starting point. This, therefore, seems to be interpreted in a manner consistent with [the thought of Plato] as we said.

But this further [claim] is excessive: to take what is divine and engendered to be the *sub-lunary* universe. [This is a step too far] even if this [sc. the sub-lunary] world is proximate to human reproduction and it is human reproduction that the present discussion is principally concerned with. Yet the account that takes it this way would be more correct than interpreting it as the heaven or the cosmos. After all, these things don’t line up neatly: the human race with either the cosmos or the heaven.<sup>165</sup> Therefore Amelius is correct, as I said, in these respects: in taking the [number] of human generation to be proximate, and in interpreting the complete number in a manner consistent with the *Timaeus*’ phrase ‘the complete year’. Nonetheless, speaking consistently with Plato, he is no longer able to say that the phrase ‘what is divine and generated’ applies to the sub-lunary region, since the sub-lunary region is something that Plato often likened to a Cave (*Rep.* 514a1) and called the place of unfortunate souls and land of oblivion (621a2) – terms that he would not use in relation to what is divine and generated, but instead in relation to a mortal place, as he does in the *Theaetetus* (176a6) when he talks about the evils that Socrates says are down here and circulate around this mortal place. Therefore, since it is the case that in the region below the Moon that gets circulated forever, there is a class of gods or daemones that always follow after the celestial things and are numerically individual and live in a cyclical manner, then it is this that it was necessary to posit as divine and generated down here. To the extent that there is transition that imitates the celestial cycle in the case of the universal elements or, in the case of individual living things, there is merely turnover from these [who are now living] to others of the same kind [in the next generation], this is merely *generated* being since it does not

It should be noted that Proclus thinks that the Perfect Number in the *Timaeus* is not the same as that in the *Republic*, since the former is ‘more partial’ (μερικώτερον, in *Tim.* III 93.26) and concerned only with the restoration of the eight spheres (μόνων τῶν ὀκτῶ περιόδων ἀποκαταστατικόν, III 93.26–7). The Perfect Number in the *Republic*, on the other hand, includes the circuits of the stars and planets, other heavenly motions of the gods and lesser divinities (whether visible or invisible), and the periods of human birth in our realm.

<sup>165</sup> Cf. above 15.1–5 for Proclus’ criticism of this correlation. For οὐ γὰρ λίνον λίνω συνάπτειν ἐστίν, compare volume I, in *Remp.* I 70.22.

have the numerical sameness that is involved in divine being.<sup>166</sup> This is instead called sameness in form (*kat' eidos*). Of such sort is the human race as well as that of other irrational animals and plants where, as he says [*Rep.* 546a4–8], in all cases fertility and infertility correspond to the rotation of the celestial spheres. 20

§30. Amelius says that the doctrines [under discussion in Plato's text] concern the descents that souls make.<sup>167</sup> For when the soul remains above it is all things in a manner that is monadic and circular – in a monadic manner since it possesses a plurality of rational principles (*logoi*) and in a circular manner since it is continuous and unified and since it has reverted upon itself. When it descends, however, it generates a number and a triangle. While it is flowing, it produces, as though from the monad of itself, the first number, three (for the dyad is in the flow itself); and when it assumes its place, it makes the perpendicular [of the triangle] and falls into the sphere of the fixed stars and into the ecliptic of the Zodiac (for this is the starting point of generation). When it has produced the perpendicular in three parts, it then goes through the level (*platos*) into which it has fallen, as if it were moved sideways, and makes the remaining [side] for the right triangle corresponding to the number four. Longing after its interior (since it would not abandon itself), it reverts again upon the starting point of the perpendicular to make the hypotenuse. 25 32 5

§31 Having thus established the triangle, Amelius deems Capricorn worthy of being made the point of origin for the sowing [of seed] under the supervision of the guardians. After all, it is nature that moves the other animals and plants to procreate [at the right time], while humans require the reason to recognise the appropriate time that leads to the requisite procreation. Capricorn is fertile since it is the starting point for the rising of the Sun's light.<sup>168</sup> This quadrant is made up of three signs: Capricorn, Aquarius, and Pisces. [Amelius says that] the most suitable time for conception is that after Pisces since humans are fertile under the following four signs: Aries, Taurus, Gemini, and Cancer (for it is in these [months] that the earth manifests its own 15 20

<sup>166</sup> The contrast seems to be between sub-lunary gods and daemones who are individually everlasting and the species that are everlasting by virtue of the fact that there are always some examples of them.

<sup>167</sup> In §36 Proclus will give his own version of the idea that the soul's descent has the triangle as its image. So this section was perhaps included to prefigure Proclus' similar exegesis of the role of the triangle in the soul's descent.

<sup>168</sup> In the tropical zodiac, the Sun traverses Capricorn from 21 December to 21 January. Its beginning thus corresponds roughly to the lengthening of days in the northern hemisphere following the winter solstice.

fertility the most<sup>169</sup>), while [the most suitable time] for birth is under the remaining signs. But the seven-month pregnancies are brought to term under the sign of Leo (for the seven months extends somewhat beyond the six signs subsequent to conception),<sup>170</sup> and these are fertile. However, those who are eight-month pregnancies will be born under Virgo and will not bear children, because they were born under the sign of the virgin. Those that are nine-month pregnancies will be born under the sign of Libra and they will be fertile.

You see how these things are like fictions. For if the things that have their time of conception in Capricorn are infertile due to the Virgin [sc. being born under Virgo], then all things that have their moment of birth (*ektropê*) when the Sun is in Virgo would have to be infertile. But if it was because it is an eight-month pregnancy then, were the moment of birth not in Virgo but rather in some other month where the birth was eight months after conception, the same thing would result and those born in Leo or in Libra would likewise be infertile. And this is just what inquiry teaches – that those [eight-month pregnancies] born in these months [sc. Leo or Libra] are infertile and those [who are not the product of an eight-month pregnancy yet are] born in Virgo are fertile. Therefore one ought not instruct the guardians in this method of conception from which [to judge] those who will be fertile.

§32 <Herophilus versus Orpheus and Pythagoreans on the seven-month pregnancy: 33.9–34.2>

The doctor Herophilus<sup>171</sup> and many others who are held in high repute say that there is a single period of time for giving birth [for human beings], as there is also for other animals, although women have mistakenly assumed that there is a seven-month pregnancy both because some experience menstrual flow for two months after conception and because they think due to menstrual flow that there had been no conception. The Pythagoreans accept the seven-month [pregnancy] just as Orpheus does, and they say that in 35 days the sperm that has been deposited [into the womb] takes on impression and form \*\*\* and \*\*\* that \*\*\* of the time of

<sup>169</sup> Surely we must read μάλιστα for ἥκιστα in line 20 or at least suppose that οὐ has somehow fallen out, so that we have: ‘it is not least in these months that the Earth manifests its own fertility.’ These four signs, encompassing 21 March to 22 July in the tropical calendar, correspond to the northern hemisphere spring and summer.

<sup>170</sup> (ἐπιλαμβάνειν γάρ τι καὶ τοῦ ἐξῆς). The sense is clear enough. Amelius is imagining conception under Capricorn, but perhaps not on 22 December, so that the seven months will yield a child born under Leo, not Cancer.

<sup>171</sup> Herophilus of Chalcedon (c. 330–260 B.C.E.) was a physician who practised in Alexandria. He is credited with the discovery of the nerves and is said to have conducted several public vivisections of condemned criminals. See von Staden (1989).

pregnancy, it is evident also in the case [of birds] \*\*\*<sup>172</sup> some hatch each day, some every other day, and some twice in a single day. And [they say] that in human beings there are many other [occurrences], which we do not see in irrational [animals], such as even the so-called cravings of \*\*\*<sup>173</sup> such as the desire for shellfish, snails, or vinegar, but the rejection of wine, bloody [foods], and often their husbands, inasmuch as [the human female] nature avoids bloody [foods] (in order that the seed [in the womb] will not be overwhelmed by an excess of blood) and avoids her husband (in order that the womb will not be disturbed). For there is this difference, that irrational animals do not engage in intercourse from the time of conception but human beings do so up until the time of birth.

§33 <Zoroaster on the seven-month pregnancy: 34.3–24>

Zoroaster<sup>174</sup> bears witness to a pregnancy of seven months, explaining that he predicts when there will be a seven-month baby. For he says:

The conceptions that occur at the conjunction of the Sun and the Moon<sup>175</sup> produce births at the time of the full Moon (*panselēnoi*);<sup>176</sup> [conceptions that occur] during the full Moon (*panselēnos*) produce [births] at the time of the conjunctions [of the Sun and the Moon]. After a conception that occurs during a conjunction when the Moon is waxing under the same sign,<sup>177</sup> births occur split between months (*dichomēnia*);<sup>178</sup> but [after a conception] when the Moon is waning, [birth occurs] in the time of a full Moon (*panselēniakos*)<sup>179</sup> – and by ‘split

<sup>172</sup> There are four lacunae in 33.16–18: ἐπὶ τ[ω]ν ἐ . . . 125 . . . καὶ . . . 28 . . . [δ]τι δὲ . . . 25 . . . [κυ]ήσεως χρόνον, δῆλον καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν . . . After τῶν Kroll suggests ὀρνίθων, which we translate here. It is impossible to have a clear understanding of what the missing text might have been.

<sup>173</sup> There is a lacuna of 4 letters: κίσσαν . . . νων καὶ. Festugière suggests ἐπ’ ἐγκύων (‘a craving of pregnant women’), but this does not take account of the letter nu in the text. The ending -νων suggests a noun in the genitive plural, representing what is craved, perhaps a space and three letters. Although the length of the words may be too great, the adjectives δεινῶν or καινῶν (‘a craving for unusual things’) would work here.

<sup>174</sup> For the pseudo-Zoroastrian text, see Festugière, 140–1 n. 4.

<sup>175</sup> That is, at the time of the new Moon.

<sup>176</sup> The Greek lunar month begins with a new Moon and ends with the next new Moon, a period of 29 or 30 days. Thus the time of the full Moon (πανσέληνος) is midmonth, the 15th day or so. When a conception takes place during the time of the new Moon, the birth takes place several months later at the time of the full Moon.

<sup>177</sup> The conjunction is the time of the New Moon; the period when the Moon is waxing is from the 1st to the 15th of the lunar month. So, the period of conception is roughly the first two weeks of the month.

<sup>178</sup> That is to say, the birth would occur during either the last week of one month or the first week of the next.

<sup>179</sup> The Moon wanes in the last half of the month, i.e. the third and fourth weeks. The ‘time of the full Moon’ is the two-week period around the 15th of the month, i.e. the second and third weeks of the month when the birth will occur.

between months' (*dichomêniai*) [Zoroaster] means the last week of one month and the first week of the next (*dichotomoi*).<sup>180</sup> Conceptions that occur split between months (*dichomêniai*) lead to births: waxing [Moons lead to births] in the time of the full Moon (*panselênos*), while waning [Moons lead to births] in the time of the conjunction.<sup>181</sup> [Conceptions that occur] in the middle of the conjunctions, [in the middle] of weeks split between the months, and [in the middle] of full Moons<sup>182</sup> \*\*\*\*55\*\*\* [Conception]<sup>183</sup> coincides with the Sun sometimes

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<sup>180</sup> The parenthetical remark is by Proclus: διχομηνίας δὲ λέγει τὸς διχοτόμους, 2.34.10–11. He is explaining the meaning of the term διχομηνία, which could mean 'full Moon' in Greek (see LSJ s.v.) but which the text of the Pseudo-Zoroaster must have used in a different manner. Proclus says that 'Zoroaster' meant διχοτόμος (literally 'cut in two'). The word indicates that 'Zoroaster' intended the time period to involve the last week of the previous month and the first week of the new month, the weeks being split between two months. Festugière solves the problem of the term's meaning by leaving διχομηνία untranslated: 'il appelle dichoméniés le premier et le dernier quartier' (141).

<sup>181</sup> αἱ δὲ ἐν διχομηνίαις συλλήψεις ἄγουσι τὰς ἀποκυήσεις αὐξόμεναι μὲν εἰς πανσέληνον, μειούμεναι δὲ εἰς σύνοδον (2.34.11–13). This is a difficult sentence, and it is possible that some corruption or loss of words has occurred. If we assume that the text is sound, the subject of the first clause is clearly συλλήψεις ('conceptions'), but this noun cannot be the one that governs the participles αὐξόμεναι (waxing) and μειούμεναι (waning), for conceptions do not grow larger or smaller. The solution that we adopt has 'Moon' govern the participles. The flow between the first half and second half of the sentence is interrupted harshly, and so we have added a colon after ἀποκυήσεις, and then introduced an understood σεληνη as the subject of the two participles.

In the two sentences (34.8–13) Proclus has thus discussed all the possible permutations of conceptions and births:

1. Conception in first two weeks of month: birth split between last week of one month and first week of the next
2. Conception in last two weeks of month: birth in weeks 2 and 3 of the same month
3. Conception between last and first weeks:
  - a. last week = birth at full moon
  - b. first week = birth at new moon

<sup>182</sup> αἱ δὲ μέσαι τῶν συν[όδων καὶ] διχομήνων καὶ πανσελήνων . . . (2.34.13–15). There follows a lacuna of 55 letters. Since the ending of the sentence is lost to us, it is difficult to speculate on what point 'Zoroaster' was going to make. Since μέσαι ('middle') is feminine plural, the understood subject is most probably συλλήψεις ('conceptions') again. It is unclear what conceptions in the middle (or midst) of these three times of the month would mean. 'Zoroaster' may be considering the time of the new Moon and the full Moon as each extending for a two-week period. Festugière (141) thinks that the term διχομήνων ('of weeks split between the months') is meant to be repeated with the first and last terms: 'Les conceptions qui ont lieu entre des conjunctions et des premiers quartiers ou entre des premiers quartiers et des pleines lunes . . .' This solution seems unlikely to us.

<sup>183</sup> We agree with Festugière (141 note 2) that the missing subject of καταλαμβάνει is ἡ σύλληψις ('conception'). As he points out, σύλληψις is also the subject of the same verb three lines below.

under the same sign of the zodiac and sometimes under the next [zodiacal sign]<sup>184</sup> \*\*\*<sup>185</sup> in the beginnings of the sign of the zodiac. When, after conception has occurred, it coincides with it [i.e. the Sun] at the end [of the sign of the zodiac], one must observe when the Moon exhibits two phases,<sup>186</sup> e.g. two conjunctions in a single month under the same zodiacal sign,<sup>187</sup> for at that time a seven-month baby is born. For the child is brought to perfection under the sign in which it had first come into being, and what it additionally received from the course of the Sun was cut off during its time in the womb.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> κα[ταλαμβάνει τὸν ἥλι[ον] τότε μὲν [ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ] ζῳδίῳ, [τό]τε δὲ ἐν τῷ ἑξῆς (2.15–16). The meaning of καταλαμβάνειν is unusual here and in line 19. The verb covers a range of meanings from physically seizing something to seizing it mentally (comprehending) to seizing it by force (compelling), as well as ‘befall’, ‘repress/check’, and ‘compel’. As a technical astronomical/astrological term, it regularly means ‘overtake’, and refers to the apparent catching up of one planet with another in a geocentric cosmos. Plato uses the related word ἐπικατάβη this way at *Tim.* 39c4, and Proclus uses καταλαμβάνειν with this meaning in his *Timaeus Commentary*. He uses both the active and passive forms of the verb several times of the planets Mercury, Venus, and the Sun at *in Tim.* III.366.24–367.1 and about the Moon overtaking Saturn and not Saturn being overtaken by the Moon at 77.20–2. He uses the Platonic ἐπικαταλαμβάνειν at *Hyp.* 4.39.5, ἐπικαταλαμβάνει τὸν ἥλιον ἢ σελήνη (‘the Moon overtakes the Sun’). Clearly this technical meaning of one planet overtaking another does not apply when the subject is ‘conception’. Another meaning (‘meet’ and hence ‘occupy [the same space]’) appears at *in Remp.* II 141.12–13, ὃν γὰρ ἀπολείπει τόπον θάτερον, καταλαμβάνει τὸ λοιπὸν (‘the place the one [god] leaves, the other occupies’); this meaning brings us closer to the usage in our passage. One can see how the meaning ‘seize’ comes to include the idea of ‘occupy’ or ‘meet up with’. The usage in our passage, however, also differs from that in the just-cited later passage. No meaning of the verb in LSJ quite matches that use of the verb, but it can be seen as an extension of the meaning ‘occupy’ or ‘meet’. The act of conception occurs in the time when the Sun is present in a certain position in the heavens. We have translated the verb as ‘coincides’ to capture that sense of ‘meet’ and ‘occur during’. There seems to be no other such use of καταλαμβάνειν in Proclus’ works, and the usage may well be peculiar to the text of the pseudo-Zoroaster.

<sup>185</sup> Just before this ellipsis the MS has ἐν (‘in’). Festugière adopts Kroll’s suggestion ἐνίοτε δέ (‘sometimes’), but this proposed reading is uncertain. There follows a lacuna of several letters. If we adopt Kroll’s suggestion, the translation would be: ‘and sometimes under the next [zodiacal sign], and sometimes . . . in the beginnings of the sign of the zodiac.’

<sup>186</sup> πότε ἡ σελήνη δύο ποιεῖται σχηματισμούς (2.34.19): literally, ‘when the Moon creates two shapes.’ Since the shapes in the example ‘Zoroaster’ will give are new Moons, we agree with Festugière that the best translation is ‘phases’.

<sup>187</sup> The so-called ‘Black Moon’. Two new Moons in the same month occur about every 29 months, and so it is relatively rare enough to be seen as an omen or sign.

<sup>188</sup> ἐν ᾧ γὰρ πρῶτως ἐφάνη τελειῶν τὸ βρέφος· ὃ δὲ προσελάμβανεν τῷ δρόμῳ τοῦ ἡλίου, τοῦτο ὑπετέμετο τοῦ ἐν τῇ γαστρὶ χρόνου (II 34.21–4). A difficult passage, to which Festugière (141 n. 4) compares a passage from book III of the *Tetrabiblos* of Ptolemy. A more detailed look at that work will prove helpful. Chapter 2 of book III deals with the traits of our human personalities that derive from the planets and stars. At III.2.2.1–3.1 Ptolemy differentiates the two sources of these traits: conception and birth. He gives greater importance to conception and to the planetary alignments when conception occurs. At III.2.3.1–5, Ptolemy notes that we do not always know



§34 <Empedocles: 34.25–36.2>

25 Empedocles also knew the two-fold time of pregnancies. As a result he calls women ‘twice-bearing’<sup>189</sup> and said himself that [a pregnancy] of [a certain] number of days is superior and that an eight-month pregnancy did not bear children.<sup>190</sup> And rightly so. For the primary number  
35 of seven-month pregnancies, 35, consists of 6+8+9+12, in which the relationship (*logos*) between the extremes is double and an octave. The primary number of nine-month pregnancies [i.e. 45] consists of concordant numbers 6+9+12+18, in which the relationship (*logos*) between the extremes is triple.<sup>191</sup> Between these there is not another

the time of conception, and so the time of birth is almost equally useful to know; it falls short of the time of conception only in that it cannot give knowledge of things before birth. Then Ptolemy writes (III.3.2.10–12): ‘The child additionally receives very many traits at that time [i.e. at the time of birth] which it did not possess before when it was in the womb, traits which belong to human nature alone’ (πλείστα τε γὰρ τότε προσλαμβάνει τὸ βρέφος, ἂ μὴ πρότερον, ὅτε κατὰ γαστρὸς ἦν, προσῆν αὐτῷ, καὶ αὐτὰ τὰ ἴδια μόνῃς τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης φύσεως). Ptolemy then adds (III.2.4.4–7) that after the child has been perfected (μετὰ τὴν τελείωσιν), i.e. after it has been born and become a human being, nature imitates the pattern set by the planets and stars at the child’s conception. ‘Zoroaster’ follows the same logic as Ptolemy, even mirroring some of the same vocabulary (although, of course, the ideas expressed by Ptolemy may well have been commonly repeated in antiquity, and so we need not think that ‘Zoroaster’ had Ptolemy’s text in front of him). The child (τὸ βρέφος), is perfected (i.e. becomes an independent human being, τελειοῖ: in Ptolemy, μετὰ τὴν τελείωσιν) under the same zodiacal sign as it was conceived, but the knowledge of what it had taken from the ascendancy of the Sun at the time of its conception was somehow lost during its time of gestation.

<sup>189</sup> Fr. 69D Diels-Kranz. Proclus assumes that the term refers to different lengths of pregnancies.

<sup>190</sup> We have seen that Aristotle thought that few eight-month babies survived (*HA* VI.584b.11–14). The question of the viability of babies born in the eighth month is also discussed in the Hippocratic Corpus in *De septimestri partu*. At 4.1–8, the author, after asserting that doctors should believe what women say about childbirth, writes: ‘Women who possess judgement and give the decisive opinion on this matter will always report and say that they give birth in the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth months, and of these those born in the eighth month do not survive’ (αἱ δὲ κρίνουσαι καὶ τὰ νικητήρια διδοῦσαι περὶ τούτου τοῦ λόγου, αἰεὶ ἐρέουσι καὶ φήσουσι τίκειν καὶ ἐπτάμηνα καὶ ὀκτάμηνα καὶ ἑννεάμηνα καὶ δεκάμηνα, καὶ τούτων τὰ ὀκτάμηνα οὐ περιγενέσθαι, 4.4–7). In the Hippocratic treatise *De octimestri partu* (10.1–5) the author gives two reasons for the failed births in the eighth year. Because of stress (κακοπαθεία) both in the womb and after birth, ‘none of the eighth-month [babies] survive’ (τῶν ὀκταμήνων οὐδὲν περιγίνεται, 10.5).

<sup>191</sup> For ‘concordant numbers’ (ἁριθμοὶς συμφώνοις, 2.35.2–3), see – with Festugière (142 n. 1) – Plato *Rep.* VII.530d1–531c8. Plato is there writing about the study of harmonics, contrasting those who study audible sounds with Pythagoreans, who look not at audible but intelligible sounds. About the former group he says: ‘They seek the numbers in these concordant audible [sounds], but they do not go into deeper problems and consider what the concordant numbers are and what they are not’ (τοὺς γὰρ ἐν ταύταις



er concordant relationship (*logos*) so that rightly, since there is not a concord (*sympbhōnia*), the eight-month pregnancy is infertile. In fact, if you add the numbers from 2 through 8, they make 35; the numbers 1 through 9 [make] 45. Now, 2 belongs to 8 as a base (because 8 is the

ταῖς συμφωνίαις ταῖς ἀκουομέναις ἀριθμούς ζητοῦσιν, ἀλλ’ οὐκ εἰς προβλήματα ἀνάσιν, ἐπισκοπεῖν τίνες σύμφωνοι ἀριθμοὶ καὶ τίνες οὐ, καὶ διὰ τί ἐκάτεροι, 531C1–4). These ‘concordant numbers’ therefore involve not ratios of audible sounds but rather those of mathematical intervals that underlie them. The sounds are particulars and the numbers are more akin to Forms. Adam in his edition of the *Republic* (vol. 2, 1902, 135) compares Plato’s numbers and ratios that make up the World Soul in the *Timaeus* (34b10–36d7). The concordant numbers here in Proclus’ commentary represent such abstract mathematics involved in uncovering the truth behind the length of pregnancies and the quality of the babies born from them.

As for the numbers in Proclus’ calculations, the numbers 35 and 45 are, respectively,  $5 \times 7$  and  $5 \times 9$ . Since the Greek month had 29 or 30 days in it, there are approximately 5 weeks per month. Thus, a seven-month pregnancy occurs on about the 35th week, the nine-month the 45th week. (Strictly, 35 weeks is 8.0494466 months; 45 weeks is 10.349288 months, and so Proclus’ rounded numbers are off slightly.) It is worth comparing the pseudo-Iamblichean *Theologoumena Arithmeticae* 51.4–26 de Falco, where the author compares the procession (πρόοδος) from 1 to 6 ‘to the efficacy of seven-month and even more of nine-month pregnancies’ (ἐπὶ δὲ γονιμότητος ἐπταμήνων καὶ ἐννεαμήνων καὶ μᾶλλον, 7–8). The author, like Proclus, imagines the seven-month proceeding from 6 to 12 and the nine-month from 6 to 18, each with two means in between (6–8–9–12 and 6–9–12–18, *Theol. Ar.* 51.17–25). Further on, he adds that 6-cubed is 216, which in days is the time period of the seven-month pregnancies, once you subtract the six days when the sperm foams and germinates (ἐπεὶ δὲ ὁ ἀπὸ τοῦ 6 κύβος σις γίνεται, ὁ ἐπὶ ἐπταμήνων γονίμων χρόνος, συναριθμουμένων τοῖς ἐπτά τῶν ἡμερῶν, ἐν αἷς ἀφροῦται καὶ διαφύσεις σπέρματος λαμβάνει τὸ σπέρμα, 52.5–8), i.e. 210 days, which is  $7 \times 30$ , or seven months. Cf. *Theol. Ar.* 64.6–9, where the same claim is made about 216 being the number of the seven-month pregnancy, with six days being subtracted.

The *Theologoumena Arithmeticae* is also an aid to understanding the two series of numbers that Proclus gives. Both begin with the number 6, which is a so-called ‘Perfect’ Number, one that equals the sum of its divisors ( $1+2+3$ ). The number 6 is also the product of its divisors ( $1 \times 2 \times 3$ ). On 6 being a Perfect Number, see *Theol. Ar.* 42.19–20: ‘The first Perfect Number is 6, for it is reckoned by its own parts: a sixth, a third, and a half’ (Ἡ ἐξὰς πρώτη τέλειος τοῖς γὰρ αὐτῆς μέρεσιν ἀριθμεῖται, ἕκτον ἔχουσα, τρίτον καὶ ἥμισυν). The final number in each series is, as Proclus says, either double (12) or triple (18) the first (6). Returning to the *Theologoumena Arithmeticae*, the author explains the first series (43.9–44.1). The number 8 is the harmonic mean, derived from the ἐπίτρίτος λόγος (43.10, the relationship of the original integer plus one-third, i.e.  $6 + 2$ ), and the number 9 is the arithmetic mean, derived from the ἡμιόλιος λόγος (43.13–14, the relationship of the original integer plus one-half, i.e.,  $6 + 3$ ). Although not discussed in detail in the *Theologoumena Arithmeticae*, the second series has the same explanation. The harmonic mean of 6 and 18 is 9; the arithmetic mean is 12. See *Theol. Ar.* 51.8–25, where the author discusses the role of the ἐπίτρίτος λόγος and the ἡμιόλιος λόγος in determining the two means in each sequence, and the relevance to seven- and nine-month pregnancies.

10 cube of 2), and 1 belongs to 9 (for 9 is the new 1<sup>192</sup>), and there is no  
mean between these [numbers]. As a result, there is not a number that  
produces a [successful] eight-month pregnancy, neither when we are  
considering the matter arithmetically nor . . .<sup>193</sup> Multiplying 6 by 35  
produces the time period [of seven months and] by 45 the time period  
15 of nine months, but multiplying 6 by 40 produces the time period of  
eight months . . .<sup>194</sup> returning to the original numbers [7], 9, and 8. One  
of these numbers [is from the smallest side]<sup>195</sup> around the right angle  
of the triangle that we shall mention, and these numbers are 4 and 3,  
female and male. Another is from the largest [sides], and these numbers  
are 4 and 5, female and male. Another is from the greatest and smallest,  
20 and these numbers are 5 and 3, both male. As a result, it is correct that  
there is no birth. And 6 will be discovered in the surface area, which is  
marriage.<sup>196</sup> As a result, since it yokes the male to the female, it rightly

<sup>192</sup> See the end of section 8, above (2.4.15–22), where Apollo, as leader of the nine Muses, harmonises (συναρμόσας, 4.17) the cosmos with three tones: Intellect, Soul, Body. The nine Muses, who have proceeded from the monadic Apollo to the enneadic number, seek to revert to the monad and form a new unity/one (ἐν νέον, 4.22).

<sup>193</sup> A lacuna of 120 letters occurs here.

<sup>194</sup> A lacuna of 10 letters occurs here.

<sup>195</sup> ἐκ τῶν ἐλαχίστων, 2.35.15. Kroll printed [ἔστιν ἐκ τῶν] in his text, and these letters better fit the space of the lacuna. In the app. crit. he explained that the missing text ought to be ἐκ τῶν ἐλαχίστων, which better fits the meaning Proclus intended. Festugière accepted this latter reading, as do we. Since Proclus is imagining a right triangle with sides that measure 3, 4, and 5 units, the understood noun should be ‘side’. Since the largest and smallest sides are male, according to Proclus, then the resulting angle cannot indicate birth (lines 19–22).

<sup>196</sup> ὁ δὲ ζ' ὀφθίσεται κατὰ τὸ ἐμβαδόν, ὅς ἐστι γάμος, 2.35.20–1. The Greek τὸ ἐμβαδόν is a geometrical term referring to the surface area of a plane figure and is often contrasted with περίμετρος (‘perimeter’). On the sequence of numbers 1 through 6 and its relationship to the right-triangle with sides of 3, 4, and 5 units, see *Theol. Ar.* 50.20–51.4, where the author considers ‘the procession from the monad [i.e. the number 1] in the Pythagorean right-triangle’ (ἀπὸ μονάδος ἐν τῷ Πυθαγορικῷ ὀρθογωνίῳ τριγώνῳ τὴν πρόδοον, 50.21–2). He arranges them in this sequence:

- 1 = the one right angle in the triangle
- 2 = the two other angles
- 3 = the smaller of the two sides that extend from the right angle
- 4 = the other of the two sides
- 5 = the hypotenuse
- 6 = the area of the triangle

After this prolegomenon, the author next discusses the two series that make up the seven- and nine-month pregnancies, thereby connecting the sequence from 1 to 6 both with 7 and 9 and with childbirth and therefore marriage. The number 8, it would seem, is not productive and so not conducive to marriage. For the attribution of the term ‘marriage’ to the number 6, see *Theol. Ar.* 43.7–9: ‘Again, it is called “marriage”

will be fertile; but if it yokes males to one another, it will be infertile. These results arise from the numbers.

The anatomists investigate also the differences among these numbers. Thus when in six days the sperm has become foamy, in the next eight days it changes into blood, in the next nine days it becomes fleshy, and in the remaining twelve days it takes on shape. Then, after the foetus has been continually fashioned, the child is born in the seventh month. And in other instances<sup>197</sup> it occurs in the same way, over 6, 8, 12, and 18 days the sperm receives the same form (*typos*) [as the seven-month pregnancy], and as a result 6 is the common source [for both pregnancies] because it produces each [of these four characteristics].

<§§35–41 Derivation of the numbers and their significance: 36.2–74.26>

§35 <Interpretation of ‘geometrical number’ at 546c6: 36.2–46.17><sup>198</sup>

It is necessary to consider the geometric number in a manner that is simultaneously arithmetical and geometric, and additionally in a manner that is musical, if we are able, and also astronomically. Then, we need to consider it dialectically and to trace it back up to both the human cycle and to the contemplation of the entire cosmos.

<A. The arithmetic reading: 36.7–42.10>

Now this [number]<sup>199</sup> \*\*\*60\*\*\* [denominating it?] \*\*\* ‘in which are first’ (*Rep.* 546b5) [found root and square increases] \*\*\*20\*\*\* ratios or \*\*\*18\*\*\*

because . . . the function of marriage is to produce offspring similar to their parents’ (ἐτι δὲ γάμος καλεῖται, ὅτι . . . γάμου δὲ ἔργον τὸ ὅμοια ποιεῖν τὰ ἐκγονα τοῖς γονεῦσι).

<sup>197</sup> I.e. in instances of nine-month pregnancies.

<sup>198</sup> Proclus now turns from his survey of previous thinkers whose ideas may be deemed to have some bearing on Plato’s nuptial number to a sustained elaboration of his own view of its significance.

<sup>199</sup> The text at this point is seriously corrupt, with Kroll identifying seven gaps comprising at least 120 letters. 36.7–11 Ἔστιν δὲ οὗτος ....60.... ονα.. .... [ἐ]ν ᾧ πρῶ[τῳ αὐξήσεις] .....πρ....νατου...20 ... λόγους εἶτε τησυν ... 18 ... δυνάμεναι ποιοῦσαι τετραγώνους, δυνα[στευ]όμεναι δὲ ἀπ’ ἐκείνων τῶν δυνάμεων ..... τῶν τετραγώνων.

However, the words [ἐ]ν ᾧ πρῶ[τῳ αὐξήσεις] make it clear that Proclus is here providing an explanation of the opening words of Plato’s calculation of the geometric number ἐν ᾧ πρῶτῳ αὐξήσεις δυνάμεναι τε καὶ δυναστεύόμεναι. We translate ‘roots and squares’ in light of Proclus’ *Euclid Commentary*:

And matters pertaining to powers obviously belong to general mathematics, whether they be roots or squares δυνάμεναι τε καὶ δυναστεύόμεναι. All these Socrates in the *Republic* puts into the mouth of his lofty-speaking Muses, bringing together in determinate limits the elements common to all mathematical ratios and setting them up in the specific numbers by which the

10 roots to make squares, since the squares result from their roots \*\*\* of the squares, for the root freely gives itself entire to the square.

In addition to these, there are both similar and dissimilar numbers.<sup>200</sup> The similar ones are those that are squares or cubes, while those that are dissimilar have sides that are unequal, whether they are planes or  
15 solids. In addition, there is also a sub-division [of the dissimilar numbers about which] he says the following: ‘waxing and waning’ (546b7). ‘Waxing’ is the product of equals multiplied by something larger, where there is a procession toward the larger from equality.<sup>201</sup> ‘Waning’ is the product of equals multiplied by something smaller.<sup>202</sup> The name they  
20 apply to those that wane is ‘bricks’ (*plinthis*), while those that wax are called ‘planks’ (*dokis*).

These increases proceeded until there were four terms that have three intervals between them – for in every case of four terms in succession there are three intervals – that make all things ‘rational and expressible’ [with one another] (546b7–c1): the roots and squares, the  
25 [numbers] similar and dissimilar to one another, and those that wax and wane. A figure (*diagramma*) comes about that has the similar and dissimilar numbers (both waxing and waning) horizontally, [these numbers] being bound together according to one ratio that will be expressed in lowest terms, but with legs having the roots and squares. And since  
37 this is the number in which all things agree with one another, making in a beautiful manner \*\*\*<sup>14</sup>\*\*\* of which four-thirds in lowest terms \*\*\*<sup>16</sup>\*\*\*  
5 of which the increases of the numbers.<sup>203</sup> This number therefore is the

periods of fruitful birth and of its opposite, unfruitfulness, can be discerned. (*in Euc.* 8.12–20, trans. Morrow)

In general, the terminology for  $\sqrt{x}$  or  $y^2$  is from *dynamai* or *dynamis* and one must attend to context to see which one is meant. *dynasteuomenōn* is from a different verb, *dynasteuō*, and – apart from the text at hand – is not generally used in mathematical contexts.

<sup>200</sup> Having given an initial explanation of the concepts in the first part of Plato’s sentence (ἐν ᾧ πρώτῳ αὐξήσεις δυνάμεναι τε καὶ δυναστευόμεναι), Proclus now skips over τρεῖς ἀποστάσεις, τέτταρος δὲ ὅρους λαβοῦσαι and begins to explain ὁμοιούντων τε καὶ ἀνομοιούντων καὶ αὐξόντων καὶ φθινόντων. Similar numbers are those that are the product of identical numbers, whether in two dimensions ( $2 \times 2 =$  a square number) or in three ( $3 \times 3 \times 3 =$  a cubic number). Dissimilar numbers have different factors (e.g.  $2 \times 3$ ) which yield an oblong planar number. The dissimilar or oblong cubes are sub-divided by reference to whether their cubes are a product of the smaller number squared times the larger or vice versa.

<sup>201</sup>  $n^2m$  where  $m > n$ . <sup>202</sup>  $m^2n$  where  $m > n$ .

<sup>203</sup> Kroll marks two gaps with space for 30 missing letters: δὲ τὰ σκέλη τοῦς δυναμένουσ καὶ δυνα[στευόμενουσ. ἐπεὶ] δὲ οὗτος ἐστὶν ὁ ἀριθμός, ἐν ᾧ πάντα ἀλλήλοισι συμβαίνει, καλῶς ποιών ... 14 ... ὧν ἐπίτριτος πυθμήν. ... 16 ... τῶν ἀριθμῶν ὧν αἱ αὐξήσεις. Festugière takes Plato as the subject for καλῶς ποιών: ‘Or puisque le nombre (se. cherché) est celui dans lequel l’action réciproque est complète, Platon a bien fait... le noyau de rapport quatre

basal *epitritos*<sup>204</sup> [with the numbers] 3 and 4. Now multiplying each of these by itself and by the other yields 9, 12, 16 in the same ratio.<sup>205</sup> And next, [taking] the 3 cubically,  $3 \times 3 \times 3$ , and in the same manner [the 4],  $4 \times 4 \times 4$ , then multiplying [with each other]  $3 \times 3 \times 4$ , and then  $4 \times 4 \times 3$ , there comes to be [a sequence] with cubes as its extreme terms, 27 and 64, with the plank, 36, having two sides that are triad and one that is a tetrad [as one middle term], while the brick, 48, has two sides, one that is a tetrad and one that is a triad [as the other middle term]. Now among these four terms in continuous [proportion] in the *epitritos* ratio (*logos*)<sup>206</sup> having three intervals – 27, 36, 48 and 64 – the 27 added to the 48 makes 75, while the 36 added to the 64 makes 100. Of this pair [of sums], the latter is the square of the decad [10] and when it is squared yields the myriad [10,000]. The former, 75, multiplied by 100 makes 7,500. These are the two harmonies [Plato speaks of at 546c2]. One is multiplied by itself<sup>207</sup> (and he made clear how this happens when he said ‘a hundred so many times’).<sup>208</sup> While the other [harmony] is of

à trois... des nombres en croissance.’ ὁ ἀριθμός (‘the number’) seems a candidate that is no less plausible.

<sup>204</sup> As in volume 4 of Proclus’ *Timaeus Commentary*, we follow Andrew Barker’s policy of simply transliterating terms that move effortlessly back and forth between arithmetic and musical settings. At its most basic, the *epitritos* is a ‘unit and a third’. It is often equated with the 4:3 ratio and this ratio corresponds to the musical fourth. In musical contexts, Proclus will often use *epitritos* to speak of the musical interval, but other times he uses it simply to express the ratio. (And this is true of other terms such as *epogdoos* (9:8 or the tone), *hēmiolios* (3:2 or the fifth).)

<sup>205</sup> I.e.  $3^2 : 3 \times 4 : 4^2$  – a sequence in continuous geometric proportion. The salient Platonic text here is *Timaeus* 32a–b where Plato considers that a single geometric mean is sufficient to bind together two plane numbers (i.e. those that are conceived of as the product of just two numbers).

<sup>206</sup> Proclus here treats the numbers that form the means between the cubes of the numbers in the *epitritos* as unlocking Plato’s meaning. If we take the ἐπίτριτος πυθμὴν and subject it to τρεῖς αὐξηθεῖς (i.e. cube its constituent numbers), then we get Proclus’ end points. If we establish two middle terms to bind these cubes in the *epitritos* ratio, we get the four-term proportion: 27, 36, 48, 64. Proclus now sums two pairs selected from this sequence:  $27+48 = 75$ , while  $36+64 = 100$ . Why these pairs? And why are they summed rather than multiplied? The answers to these questions are given by Proclus’ other pathway to the ‘harmonies’ in question below. For the present, each sum – 75 and 100 – is multiplied by 100. The latter move is dictated by Plato’s instruction τὴν μὲν ἴσην ἰσάκεις, ἑκατὸν τοσαυτάκεις. This yields a square number, 10,000, whose root is 100. Such a number is a ‘similar number’ since the sides are equal. The 75 is also multiplied by 100 and this yields an oblong number with one side equal to the square (100) and the other side equal to the ‘shorter’ 75. The resulting 7,500 is a dissimilar number since its sides are of different lengths. See further above on Proclus’ interpretation of 7,500 and 10,000: II.22.5–22.19 with our notes *ad loc.*

<sup>207</sup> ἴσην ἰσάκεις – literally ‘equal taken equal times’. Proclus attempts to analyse this phrase into its constituent parts at 38.1–4.

<sup>208</sup> δύο ἁρμονίας παρέχεται τρεῖς αὐξηθεῖς, τὴν μὲν ἴσην ἰσάκεις, ἑκατὸν τοσαυτάκεις, τὴν δὲ ...

equal length (*isomêkês*) with the former due to the 100, but elongated (*promêkês*) due to the 75 which length that has been made shorter.<sup>209</sup> Thus he plausibly said that the basal (*pythmên*) *epitritos* is increased three times to make two harmonies for, proceeding as far as the four  
 25 solid [numbers], the sides of the two harmonies are provided from the combination of these – i.e. the one hundred and the seventy-five.<sup>210</sup> He revealed univocally (*monachôs*) the one with same lengths (*tautomêkês*) when he defined it as ‘multiplied by itself’ and then added ‘a hundred so many times’, for while ‘multiplied by itself’ is capable of meaning something other <than the myriad>,<sup>211</sup> nonetheless, ‘multiplied by it-  
 38 self’ plausibly expresses ‘equality of length’ (*tautomêkês*). The hundred is ‘an equal [number]’ because it is often assumed, and ‘by an equal number’ because it was possible for it to be assumed many times with reference to another number, for instance ten or twenty [in] ‘ten-fold’ or ‘twenty-fold’.<sup>212</sup> But the [harmony established through] the oblong  
 5 length (*promêkês*) is one that he presented through a wider variety of assumptions,<sup>213</sup> for when he divided the number 75 into the ones that sum to it – I mean 27 and 48 – and multiplied them by 100 instead of the 75 in its entirety, he represented how it is oblong. For, he says, it is

<sup>209</sup> See Nicomachus, *Arith.* II.18.2 for ‘oblong numbers’. If you think of these as plane numbers – that is to say, represented as rectangles with two sides whose lengths are the factors of the numbers – then on Nicomachus’ definition, an oblong number is one where the sides differ by *more than 1*. So 8 is an oblong number since it is 2x4 and 4 exceeds 2 by more than 1. When a number is such that one side exceeds the other by *exactly 1*, Nicomachus calls this ‘heteromecic’. Six is heteromecic since it is 2x3 and 3 is exactly 1 more than 2. Theon of Smyrna has slightly different vocabulary and defines oblong numbers as those whose sides differ by 1 or any larger number. Cf. d’Ooge (1926), 258.

<sup>210</sup> We think there is probably no significance to the fact that Proclus sometimes switches between number words and numerals, e.g. ἑκατόν and ρ’. It is also possible that the variation is due merely to scribal whim at some point in the transmission of the text. But we will nonetheless follow the text in writing out ‘one hundred’ or putting in the numeral 100. Perhaps other readers will see a significance we missed.

<sup>211</sup> Kroll marks a lacuna of fifteen letters and conjectures ποιεῖν ἢ τὸν μύρια.

<sup>212</sup> ἴση μὲν διότι ὁ ἑκατόν [πολ]λάκις λαμβάνεται, ἰσάκις δὲ διότι ἡδύνατο πολλάκις μὲν ληφθῆναι, κατὰ ἄλλον δὲ ἀριθμὸν πολλάκις, οἷον τὸν δέκα ἢ τὸν εἴκοσι, δεκάκις καὶ εἰκοσάκις. This is deeply obscure and we have translated it as literally as possible. We suspect that the intended sense may seek to exhibit the number one hundred as somehow implicit in Plato’s ἴσην ἰσάκις. So a freer translation might be something like: The hundred is *multiplied* because it is taken many times, but it is multiplied *by itself* because it was meant to be taken many times *by another number*: for instance when multiplied by ten or by twenty in ‘ten-fold’ or ‘twenty-fold’.

<sup>213</sup> This ‘variety of assumptions’, through which Proclus says that Plato presents the oblong length, is in contrast to the ‘univocal’ (*monachôs*) way in which he says just before that Plato presents the harmony with the same length. Proclus sees Plato’s method of exposition, in other words, as suited to the uniform and multiform character, respectively, of the harmonies which he describes.

necessary to multiply 27 a hundred-fold, and then [to multiply] other numbers by a hundred – numbers which result from the diameter of the square assumed to have a side whose length is 5, and subtracting one unit to get a rational diagonal, while subtracting two units from the irrational one.<sup>214</sup> Through [either] of these [methods] he signifies 48.<sup>215</sup> For if you were to assume some square whose side was 5, and in this [square] the diagonal is utterly irrational because of the rational side, then the [square] from this will be 25. And [the square] that is double [this one] will have an area that is 50, [the side] of which would be the irrational side [of the first square]. For there is no number to assume for the square that is double [the area] of the [first] square. Thus should we wish to discover a diagonal that is a rational [number] for a figure double this one, taking the approximate (*synegkus*) root, it will not be this one [i.e. the one from the double, that is 50] (which is impossible). But rather than assuming one that is smaller by a unit, let us assume 7 and from this the [area] is 49, less by one unit than 50, which was the [area] of the one with the irrational diagonal. Once these matters have been grasped, what remains is clear: how [to construct the square that is] double [in area] from the diagonal [of the square] of 5, [with the side] derived from the irrational [diagonal of the first figure]. But this was the \*\*\*<sup>216</sup> the 7500 which results from 100 and 75 being multiplied,<sup>217</sup> with 75 being the sum of 27 and 48.

<sup>214</sup> Proclus' explanation now moves very quickly since the method of side- and diagonal-numbers has been reviewed above in §23 on the Pythagoreans and again in §27 on the Pythagoreans and Plato.

<sup>215</sup> On the basis of what is to come next in Plato's text (ἐκατὸν μὲν ἀριθμῶν ἀπὸ διαμέτρων ῥητῶν πεμπτάδος, δεομένων ἑνὸς ἐκάστων, ἀρρήτων δὲ δυοῖν, ἐκατὸν δὲ κύβων τριάδος – 'One of its sides is one hundred squares of the rational diameter of five diminished by one each or one hundred squares of the irrational diameter diminished by two each. The other side is a hundred cubes of three'). The 'rational diameter' of 5 is the rational number closest to the real length of the diagonal of a square whose sides are 5. That is to say, it is the rational number closest to  $\sqrt{50}$ , which is 7. Since the square of 7 is 49, we get the longer side of the oblong rectangle by subtracting 1 from 49 and multiplying the result by 100. This gives 4,800. The 'irrational diameter' of 5 is  $\sqrt{50}$ . This number is squared, then diminished by 2, and multiplied by 100 which yields also 4,800. So we have two pathways to  $100 \times 48$ . But then we have the instruction – as Proclus supposes – to multiply 27 by 100. Summing these yields 7,500 – the oblong number that Proclus earlier derived by selecting 27 and 48 from his continuous geometric proportion between cubes (27, 36, 48, 64), 'marrying' two pairs from this sequence by summing them ( $27+48 = 75$ ), and then multiplying by 100.

<sup>216</sup> Kroll marks a significant gap in the text with space for 183 letters. The only things legible are the numbers 48, 7 and 5.

<sup>217</sup> Kroll supplies [καὶ τοῦ οὗ συγκεῖ]μενος which is a bit odd since this normally means addition (as it does above at 27.21), not multiplication. Our inspection of the digitised Vatic. gr. 2197 yielded nothing: the image is entirely illegible. If Kroll has guessed



Thus the two harmonies – the equal length and the oblong length –  
 5 have come to be in this way. They are called ‘harmonies’ because they  
 both are established on the basis of harmonic proportions.<sup>218</sup> In one, the  
 base sequence 3, 4, 6, 12 is taken three hundred-fold and in the other  
 it is taken four hundred-fold.<sup>219</sup> And in the case of these very things,  
 that is of the three hundred-fold and four hundred-fold, there is the  
*epitritus* ratio at the origin. Therefore, of these harmonies, the oblong  
 10 one is 900, 1,200, 1,800, and 3,600 which are 3, 4, 6, and 12 multiplied  
 three hundred-fold. The one of equal length comes from 1,200, 1,600,  
 2,400, and 4,800 which are 3, 4, 6, and 12 multiplied four hundred-fold.  
 Among these, the extreme terms have the same status which the middles  
 have.<sup>220</sup> It turns out thusly in a number of ways, but in brief: taking the  
 15 basic *epitritus*, the 3, 4, and the 5, to which this has been married, we

correctly, then this is must be an unusually loose sense of this term: a ‘combination’  
 that results from multiplying.

<sup>218</sup> ‘The proportion that is placed in the third order is the one called the harmonic, which  
 exists whenever among three terms the mean on examination is observed to be neither  
 in the same ratio to the extremes, antecedent of one and consequent of the other, as  
 in the geometric proportion, nor with equal intervals, but with an inequality of ratios,  
 as in the arithmetic, but on the contrary, as the greatest term is to the smallest, so the  
 difference between greatest and mean terms is to the difference between mean and  
 smallest term.’ Nicomachus, *Arith.* II 25.1, trans. d’Ooge (1926). Cf. Theon 114.14, ff.

In the series 3, 4, 6, the middle term exceeds 3 by 1 which is  $\frac{1}{3}$  of 3. The 6, in turn,  
 exceeds the middle term by 2 which is likewise  $\frac{1}{3}$  of 6. The 6, in turn, forms a harmonic  
 mean between 4 and 12 since 6 exceeds 4 by 2 which is  $\frac{1}{2}$  of 4 and is exceeded by 12  
 by 6 which is  $\frac{1}{2}$  of 12. So in the harmonic proportion, the middle term exceeds and is  
 exceeded by the ‘same part’ of the extreme terms. In modern notation, three terms  $a, b,$   
 $c$  are in harmonic proportion when  $\frac{1}{a} + \frac{1}{c} = \frac{2}{b}$ .

<sup>219</sup> The first sums to 7,500, the latter to 10,000. Proclus earlier reached these numbers  
 by adding two of the four terms in the continuous geometric proportion established  
 between  $3^3$  and  $4^3$  (viz.  $27+48 = 75$  and  $36+64 = 100$ ) and multiplying the result by  
 100. This sequence 27, 36, 48, 64 is a four-term continuous geometric proportion that  
 preserves the 4:3 ratio.

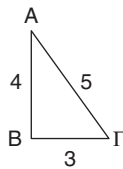
<sup>220</sup> Festugière amends the text at this point in light of Kroll’s observation that ὡν οἱ ἄκροι  
 τὸν αὐτὸν ἔχουσι λόγον, ὃν καὶ αἱ μεσότητες is simply false. The extreme terms (3 and  
 12) do *not* stand in the same *ratio* as the middle terms (6 and 4). 12 and 3 stand in the  
 ratio of 4:1 while 6 and 4 stand in the ratio of 3:2. Accordingly Festugière reads οἱ  
 ἄκροι <λόγοι> τὸν αὐτὸν ἔχουσι. The ratios of the extremes to the middle terms (i.e. of  
 12:6 and of 4:3) are the same as the ratios between the terms that form the middles  
 between them. That is to say  $\frac{12}{6} : \frac{4}{3} = \frac{12 \times 3}{6 \times 4} = \frac{6}{4}$ . This would indeed solve the problem  
 that Kroll points to. But one might be able to keep the text as it stands if we give *logos*  
 the sense of ‘status’ or ‘role’. The numbers 3, 4, 6 constitute a harmonic ratio. So do  
 the numbers 4, 6, 12. The four-term sequence does not constitute a single harmonic  
 proportion, but it remains true that both the extremes and middles have the same  
 status – they figure in harmonic proportions (albeit not in the same one).



shall get four multiplied by five multiplied by five = 100, and then three multiplied by five multiplied by five = 75. Then [taking] these numbers we multiply the 100 by itself in order that the myriad (10,000) should come to be, but multiply the 100 by 75, in order that seven thousand five hundred should come to be. And in this manner, since the basic *epitritos*, increased three-fold, will be married to the pentad, it will make the two harmonies, one equal in length, the other oblong. But at the same time, it is wholly necessary to make use of another method too, if Plato himself indeed splits the 75 into 27 and 48, generating the former [harmonies] in an orderly manner that the \*\*\*60\*\*\* three multiplied by three multiplied by three is 27, and four multiplied by four multiplied by four is 64, while three multiplied by three multiplied by three is 36 and four multiplied by four multiplied by three is 48. And in this manner, once again, the basal *epitritos* married to the pentad produces (*parechein*) the two harmonies when it is increased three-fold, [increasing three-fold] in some places in the manner of a cube, but in others in the manner of a plank or a brick.

<B. The geometric reading: 40.1–42.10>

One must explain the matter at hand in this way arithmetically, but one explains it geometrically in the following manner.<sup>221</sup> Let there be a triangle ABΓ; let this triangle's side AB be four and BΓ be three, while AΓ is five (Figure 13.1).<sup>222</sup>

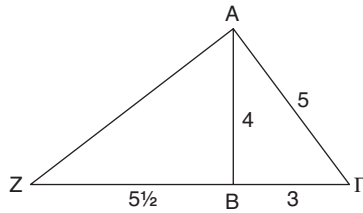


Let AZ be perpendicular to AΓ extending to the point at which it intersects the continuation of BΓ. In the right triangle formed by AZΓ, the perpendicular height is AB. AB is thus the middle term in a proportion between ZB and BΓ.<sup>223</sup> But AB stands to BΓ in the ratio 4:3 (*epitritos*). Consequently, BZ is also in the 4:3 to BA. Therefore, there is 5 and a third [as a value for BZ] (Figure 13.2).

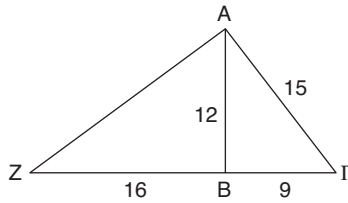
<sup>221</sup> Hultsch (in Kroll, 409, ff.) argues that Proclus is likely to be indebted to Nestorius for these diagrams and the accompanying explanation on the basis of his work on right triangles, adverted to by Proclus at 64.5, ff. Proclus is about to say who is responsible – ‘the great ....’ – but the text at 42.10 is damaged and there is a gap.

<sup>222</sup> In what follows, we copy the diagrams from Kroll’s text, with Greek numerals changed to Roman, and insert them where it seems appropriate. In the manuscript, they all appear grouped together on 49f r.

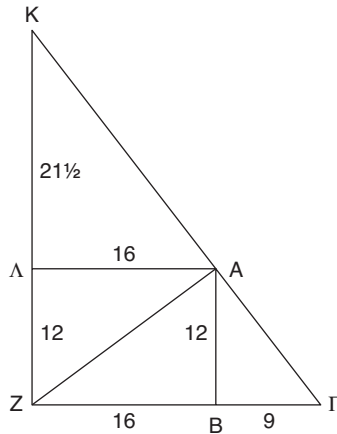
<sup>223</sup> As Hultsch notes in his excursus in Kroll’s volume 2, this is proved as a corollary to proposition 8 in Book VI of Euclid’s *Elements*.



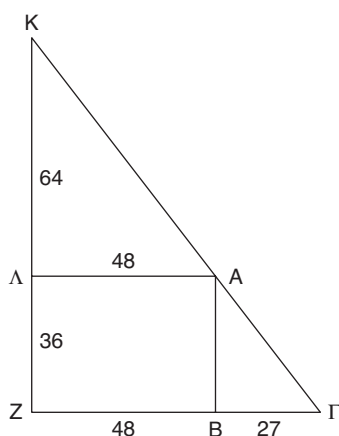
Let us multiply by three in order that whole units may result. Thus  
 10 ZB will be sixteen; BA will be twelve of these [units]; BΓ will be nine, and  
 AΓ fifteen (Figure 13.3).



Let us draw ZK perpendicularly [to ZΓ] extending to the point at  
 which it intersects the continuation of ΓA and let us also draw AΛ pa-  
 rallel to ZΓ (Figure 13.4).



Since ZAK is once again a right triangle and since its height is AΛ,  
 AΛ is thus the middle term in a proportion between ZΛ and ΛK. There-  
 15 fore, since ZΛ was 12, AΛ is sixteen units (since the line parallel to this  
 [sc. ZB] was that long) and KΛ stands in the 4:3 ratio to AΛ. Consequen-  
 tly KΛ is  $21\frac{1}{3}$  since AΛ is sixteen. Let us therefore once again multiply all  
 these by three because of the fraction  $\frac{1}{3}$  (Figure 13.5).



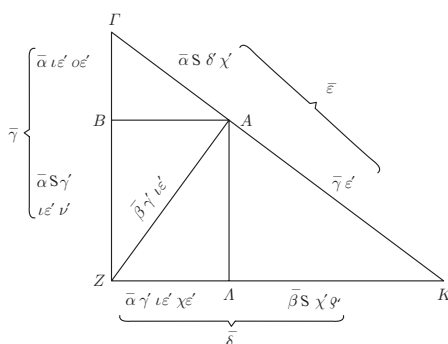
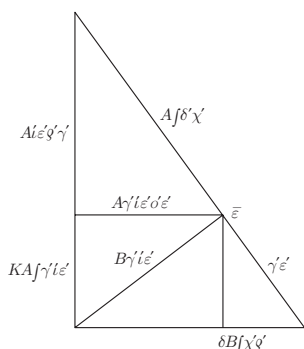
KΛ thus becomes sixty four units, while ΛA becomes forty eight, and  
 ΛZ thirty six. Finally, BΓ is twenty seven units. Now these four are the  
 [numbers] from which both one hundred and seventy five came to be  
 earlier, which [in turn] create the harmonies ten thousand and seven  
 thousand five hundred.

20

Such is the theorem considered in a geometrical manner. But it is  
 requisite to add the following: while we proceeded from the triangle  
 given at the beginning to the numbers that are sought through addition,  
 others [get there] by subtraction. Taking the 3, 4, 5 triangle, they  
 drew the perpendicular height toward the side that is 5.<sup>224</sup>

25

<sup>224</sup> In the previous explanation of the geometrical mode of dealing with the passage, we constructed larger triangles from the 3, 4, 5 right-triangle given at the start by constructing further triangles external to it. As the diagram makes clear, this time we are reducing the starting triangle by cutting it up into smaller ones. The diagram on the left comes from the manuscript (Kroll, 41), while the one on the right is Hultsch's attempt to establish the correct values in his excursus to Kroll's edition (Figures 13.6 and 13.7).



30 They discovered that each of the triangles on the sides of the perpen-  
 42 dicular was in the same ratio to it, calculating the numbers<sup>225</sup> in fractions  
 of units.<sup>226</sup> Now, once again drawing the perpendicular of the height  
 from the right angle in the triangles, toward either the 4 or toward the  
 5 3 [side], and discovering the same ratios as at the beginning – since it is  
 always the case that triangles next to the perpendicular [line] are similar  
 to the whole (ΓΖΚ) and to each other (ΒΖΑ and ΖΛΑ) – they calculated  
 the sides of the triangles thus generated in units and fractions. Next,  
 multiplying all the sides by twenty-five, they came face to face with the  
 numbers arrived at via the method of addition. This approach to the  
 interpretation [through subtraction] was chosen by Paterios, while the  
 10 former approach was that of the great \*\*\* 9 \*\*\*.<sup>227</sup>

<C. The musical reading: 42.11–43.19>

Let us contemplate the object of our enquiry in the geometrical mode  
 only this far. But among these let there be \*\*\*\*12\*\*\* such as of things  
 by the priest<sup>228</sup> \*\*\*11\*\*\* having been judged through subtraction. \*\*\*  
 and the musical ratios \*\*\*\*8\*\*\* in this manner by the original triangle.  
 15 Since the numbers of the sides are three, four, and five, the [sum] of  
 all of them is twelve, while the area is six. Therefore the *epitritos* ratio  
 is [composed] of the three and the four; the *bēmiolios* of the six and the  
 20 four; the *epogdoos* of the nine and the eight (for which each of the sides  
 adjacent to the right angle is added to the hypotenuse).<sup>229</sup> The double

<sup>225</sup> The pagination in our translation skips 41 since this page in Kroll's text is taken up by the diagrams we have reproduced in the body of our translation.

<sup>226</sup> ἔλαβον τοὺς ἀριθμοὺς ἐν μορίοις τισὶ μονάδων. Cf. 42. ἔλαβον ... τὰς πλευρὰς ἐν μονάσιν καὶ μορίοις. There are complex issues here in the history of mathematics that we do not propose to enter into. Hultsch argued that the former terminology pointed toward the use of Egyptian techniques for working with fractions – the method of Stammbrüche or 'fundamental fractions' having 1 as the numerator. Moreover, he supposed that the diagram from the manuscript, though it involved mistakes, pointed toward calculations arrived at via that method. This he supposed to be an exciting possibility: 'die jedoch von grossem historischen Interesse ist, weil sie eine um drei bis vier Jahrhunderte vor der Niederschrift des mathematischen Papyrus von Akhmim zurückliegende Sammlung von Beispielen zur ägyptischen Teilungsrechnung bietet' (409).

<sup>227</sup> Paterios appears to have been a Platonist mathematician, as Festugière notes *ad loc.* The lacuna beginning in 42.10 has destroyed the name of the mathematician responsible for the method of magnification to arrive at the harmonies. Pitra, as reported in Kroll's *apparatus criticus*, suggested Euclid, which is possible.

<sup>228</sup> \*\*\*12\*\*\* [τὸ] τοιοῦτον τῶν ὑπὸ τοῦ θυηκόου \*\*\*11\*\*\* The word θυηκόου occurs only once in Proclus and is generally rare. The 5th–6th-century Alexandrine lexicographer, Hesychius, gives the following: *Lexicon* (theta.838) θυηκόου. ἱερεὺς.

<sup>229</sup> Proclus thus manages to locate the numbers corresponding to the Pythagorean musical intervals of the fifth, the fourth, and the tone. For the general background, see *Timaeus Commentary*, vol. 4, 11–14.

is [composed] of the six and the three; the triple of the twelve and the four; the quadruple of the twelve and the three. The three means (*mesotês*) that fill up the soul are also in them.<sup>230</sup> The arithmetic [mean] is present in the sides: three, four, five; while the harmonic [mean] is in the sides adjacent to the right angle and the area: three, four, six. The geometric [mean] is in the sum of all the sides, twelve, and in the area, six, and in the shortest side, three. Therefore it has been adorned with all the harmonic ratios and with the ratios of the three means. Whatever is in this primary triangle (for there exists no right triangle composed of other rational sides<sup>231</sup> that is prior to this one) is inevitably also in those that have resulted from a three-fold increase, for their parts have the same ratio by virtue of being multiples [of the original lengths in the three, four, five right-triangle]. You can also see how the harmonic ratios are in it, just as in the semi-triangle in the *Timaeus*.<sup>232</sup> But in that case, there is also something irrational with respect to the lengths in the sides, since \*\*\*11\*\*\* seed of bodies. But in the case at hand, all the lengths are rational.<sup>233</sup> And it is also clear that \*\*\*13\*\*\* surely such as to impart life (*zôogonikos*). The triangle is also appropriate to becoming and all the life-engendering ratios (*logos*) are conspicuous in this very triangle – the double and triple that signify the seven terms in the generation of the soul, as well as the 3:2 (*bêmiolos*), the 4:3 (*epitritos*) and the 9:8 (*epogdoos*) by means of which he sub-divided the double and triple intervals.<sup>234</sup> Moreover, it is clear in what way this triangle too is half of another triangle, though one that is entirely isosceles – whether it should come about having as its basis the duplication of the larger of the sides adjacent to the right angle or whether it should come about

<sup>230</sup> Cf. Proclus, in *Tim.* II 167.24–187.16.

<sup>231</sup> As Festugière notes, this is not strictly speaking true. What is true is that the 3, 4, 5 right-triangle is the smallest with rational sides *measured in whole numbers*.

<sup>232</sup> Proclus refers to the half-equilateral isosceles triangle that (together with the scalene triangle) makes up the faces of the elemental shapes in *Timaeus* 53a–b. This triangle will have sides that are 1, 2 and  $\sqrt{3}$ . While the 3, 4, 5 right-triangle yields all the ratios relevant to the Pythagorean harmonies, this one only exhibits the 2:1 ratio identified with the octave. The ‘something irrational’ is the  $\sqrt{3}$ .

<sup>233</sup> Coming after the gap in the text, this suggests Proclus has left behind the half-equilateral of the *Timaeus* and reverted to discussion of the 3, 4, 5 triangle that he identifies with the basic *epitritos*. After all, only this triangle – and not the half equilateral of *Timaeus* 53b – exhibits the ‘life engendering’ musical ratios that he will go on to discuss.

<sup>234</sup> Proclus refers to the sequence of numbers corresponding to the portions of ‘soul stuff’ that the Demiurge takes from the mixing bowl in *Tim.* 35b, ff., which form doubles and triples: 1, 2, 4, 8 and 3, 9, 27. The musical intervals of the fourth, the fifth, and the tone are then inserted between these double and triple sequences.

having as its basis the duplication of the smaller side, extending each line outward from itself.

<D. The astronomical reading: 43.20–45.16>

20 Well then, it surely remains to consider such [numbers] as are present  
in it [sc. the 3–4–5 right-triangle] in relation to the heavens. Therefore,  
the five separated the five circles in the sphere of the fixed stars: the Arc-  
tic and Antarctic [circles], the winter and summer tropics, and (interme-  
25 diate between these) the [celestial] equator.<sup>235</sup> It divided the five in the  
planets from the two luminaries,<sup>236</sup> since [the five] possess independent  
progressions.<sup>237</sup> It has also been allotted [to the five] to define the best  
44 of the shapes among the aspects, namely the triangle.<sup>238</sup> It has filled the  
entire cosmos in the five elemental-formed shapes<sup>239</sup> and five centres.<sup>240</sup>

<sup>235</sup> Cf. Theon, *Util.* 129.22–130.15 on these five circles.

<sup>236</sup> There are seven planets or wanderers recognised by the ancient world: Moon, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. The Sun and Moon are regarded by astrologists as ‘luminaries’ with the Sun ruling over the diurnal order and the Moon over the nocturnal. Cf. Paul of Alexandria, *Elements* 18.11, ff.

<sup>237</sup> ἔξαίρετους ἔχοντας τὰς προσθαφαίρεσεις. The precise sense is unclear. In general, προσθαφαίρεσις is an astronomical or astrological term for addition or subtraction that may be required under some circumstances for the model to match the appearance. Thus, it is used in Vettius Valens to describe a method for calculating the differences in the rising times for different *signs*. The term occurs below at *in Remp.* II 58.25 and at that point Festugière, with Neugebauer’s assistance, suggests translating it in terms of the prograde and retrograde motions of the planets.

<sup>238</sup> Festugière supposes that this alludes to the fact that there are five determinate measures given by the triangle: the measurement of each of the three sides (3, 4, 5), the perimeter (12), and the area (6) (cf. 42.15–16). But this mathematical fact does not seem salient to the astronomical or astrological context. When Proclus again mentions τὰς προσθαφαίρεσεις at 58.25 below, he notes that three of the five planets are ‘in trine’ and make a 120-degree triangle with the Sun at the time of their direct and retrograde motions. It seems plausible that Proclus has in mind here that the five planets are particularly important points in the sky for determining the astrological aspect of trine and trine, in turn, is credited with being particularly influential.

<sup>239</sup> The five Platonic solids; cf. *Tim.* 55c. Festugière attaches significance to Proclus’ terminology here: ‘Le qualificatif “élémentaire”, στοιχειώδης, appliqué à l’ensemble des 5 polyèdres réguliers, semble indiquer que Proclus pense ici à la physique de l’*Épinomis* plutôt qu’à celle du *Timée*.’ While the *Epinomis* makes ether a fifth element, the *Timaeus* assigns the fifth Platonic solid to the shape of the cosmos. This is possible, but it seems equally possible – and perhaps a bit more likely – that in this context Proclus’ use of στοιχειώδης reflects the distinction drawn in the *Euclid Commentary* at 72.1 between what is truly fundamental and what is less so. If it means anything at all, perhaps his use of στοιχειώδης signifies only that the elemental shapes are less fundamental than the numbers or triangles that define those shapes.

<sup>240</sup> As Festugière notes, this is likely to be four cardinal points used by astrologers, as well as the centre of the Earth. On the four cardinal points as they are pre-figured in the World Soul, see *in Tim.* II 260.15

Furthermore, on the one hand, the four produces the [astrological] aspect of the things that undergo motion, the quartile,<sup>241</sup> while on the other it manifested the circle of the zodiac that is divided into four parts.<sup>242</sup> Among the planets, it defined the motions for each one (for there are four: around its own centre, lengthwise, across, and in depth).<sup>5</sup> \*\*\*\*<sup>11</sup> it distinguished those that follow from one another \*\*\*\*<sup>9</sup> by cycle. It distinguished the risings and settings of the Moon from the signs of the tropics in terms of its northern and southern limits.

The three defined three circles cutting one another at right angles,<sup>243</sup> while among the shapes [or aspects], it has been allotted the hexagon [or sextile]. It divides the zodiac thrice into tropical, bi-corporeal and solid signs,<sup>244</sup> and it produced the three positions of the things that undergo motion [sc the heavenly bodies]: centres, those that follow [the centres], and those that precede [the centres].<sup>245</sup> [The three] made the places for the lunar risings and settings, three for each. And it made the movements of the [planetary] irregularities (i.e. apogee, perigee, intermediate, and again, retrogradation, station, and progression). It individually<sup>10</sup>

<sup>241</sup> Festugière notes: 'Là aussi, Proclus s'écarte de la physique du *Timée* qui admet 7 mouvements fondamentaux, Platon y comptant pour 2 mouvements différents les mouvements de translation opposés sur chacun des 3 axes de longueur, de largeur et de profondeur, cf. *Timée* 34 A 2 et passim.'

We agree that linking the square or rectangle (*tetrágōnon*) to movement is puzzling if this is meant as a classification of the kinds of movements that things can undergo. Is it possible that Proclus has in mind the astrological aspect of quartile? That would make sense given that we are now reading the geometric number in relation to the heavens (43.21 above). Ptolemy *Tetrabib.* I.13 notes that quartile is disharmonious because it is composed of signs of different kinds. Motion is, of course, associated with Difference.

<sup>242</sup> Cf. Manilius, *Astron.* II 270, ff. Four triangles can be inscribed within the circle of the Zodiac – one for each of the elements.

<sup>243</sup> ἡ δὲ] τριάς τρεῖς μὲν μόνους ἀλλήλους [τέμνον]τας κύκλους πρὸς ὀρθὰς ὥρισεν. Kroll suspected that μόνους was corrupt, probably on the strength of 44.24–5 below: τῶν δὲ τριῶν κύκλων τῶν πρὸς ὀρθὰς τεμνόντων ἀλλήλους. We have accordingly omitted it. It seems not unlikely that *something* has gone wrong with the text since this makes little sense. The three circles cannot be the tropics and the circle of the ecliptic since they do not meet at right angles, as Proclus knows full well; cf. *in Tim.* II 237.27, ff. Festugière translates: 'Le trois a déterminé trois cercles particuliers ...'

<sup>244</sup> 'Bi-corporeal' signs are also called mutable signs in the language of astrology. Cf. Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos* I. 11, 'Of the remaining eight signs four are called solid and four bicorporeal. The solid signs, Taurus, Leo, Scorpio, and Aquarius, are those which follow the solstitial and equinoctial signs; and they are so called because when the Sun is in them the moisture, heat, dryness, and cold of the seasons that begin in the preceding signs touch us more firmly... The bicorporeal signs, Gemini, Virgo, Sagittarius, and Pisces, are those which follow the solid signs, and are so called because they are between the solid and the solstitial and equinoctial signs' (LCL, vol. 435, 67–9).

<sup>245</sup> Cf. Bouché-Leclercq (1899), 273.

20 established the lunar phases that occur between conjunctions and the full moon, each of these being three in number – crescent, half-moon, and gibbous – giving each a distinctive shape, with the hexagon for the crescent moon, the square for the half moon, and the triangle for the gibbous.<sup>246</sup>

25 The six divided the circle of the zodiac into female and male, since it has a male–female nature.<sup>247</sup> In the case of the three circles dividing one another at right angles, [six] provided the common points of intersection<sup>248</sup> that are always the same. Multiplied by itself, it defined the decans, which are thirty-six in total. Multiplied together with four, [six]  
45 defined the hours – twenty-four in number. Multiplied together with five, it defined the portions of the zodiac according to one and the same number.<sup>249</sup> Multiplied together with three, it comes to undergird the motion along the diagonal by virtue of the triangular side<sup>250</sup> \*\*\*<sup>22\*\*\*</sup> the diameter being six \*\*\*

10 The remaining [number] twelve fills out the surface of the dodecahedron with 12 pentagons and illustrates the heavens in their entirety, or rather ‘paints it with all colours’ as he says in the *Timaean*.<sup>251</sup> It established the number of signs in the zodiac contained within boundaries of the same number as that of which it is the number. It defined the complete cycle for the ‘king of the visible realm’ as Plato says (*Rep.* 509d2–3), since he [sc. the Sun] is the cause of all growth, increase, and becoming around the circle of the zodiac. It is for these reasons as

<sup>246</sup> Cf. Paulus Alexandrinus, *Elementa apotelesmatica* 33.23 (Boer) for the same associations of lunar phases with shapes and Bouché-Leclercq (1899), 166 n.1.

<sup>247</sup> Cf. Iamblichus, *Theol. Arith.* 43.5.6 is the product of the first male and female numbers, 2 and 3. According to Paulus half of the signs of the zodiac are male, the other half female. Moreover, this seems to be linked in his account to the masculine or feminine character of odd and even: *Elementa apotelesmatica* 8.7–12 Ἀρσενικά μὲν ζώδια εἰσι τὰδε· Κριός, Δίδυμοι, Λέων, Ζυγός, Τοξότης, Ὑδροχόος, θηλυκά δὲ τὰ τούτων ὑπόλοιπα· Ταῦρος, Καρκίνος, Παρθένος, Σκορπίος, Αἰγόκερως, Ἰχθύες· καὶ καθόλου εἰπεῖν, ὅσα περιττὸν ἀριθμὸν ἐκδέχεται ἀπὸ πρώτου Κριοῦ ἀρχόμενα, ταῦτα ἀρσενικά νοεῖσθω, ὅσα δὲ ἄρτιον θηλυκά. By contrast, Ptolemy seems to make the question of whether a sign is diurnal or nocturnal the determinant of its gender, *Tetrabiblos* I 12.

<sup>248</sup> See above on 44.10. Proclus’ meaning here escapes us.

<sup>249</sup> As Festugière notes, the 360 degrees of the circle is divided into 12 signs corresponding to 30 degrees each.

<sup>250</sup> The vocabulary of ‘undergirding’ recalls both Plato’s Myth of Er (*Rep.* 616c3) as well as the *Chaldean Oracles*. Festugière supposes that here Proclus attempts to give a value to the obliquity of the ecliptic – a question about which he offered no opinion in the *Timaean Commentary*. If we multiply 6 by 3 and divide 360 degrees by the product, 18, we get 20 degrees for the value. Ptolemy’s more empirical approach to this question yielded the figure 23° 51’ 20”, cf. *Almagest* I 12.

<sup>251</sup> σχηματογραφεῖ πάντα τὸν [οὐρανόν, μᾶλ]λον δὲ διαζωγραφεῖ. Cf. *Tim.* 55c4–6 εἴ τι δὲ οὐσῆς συστάσεως μιᾶς πέμπτῃς, ἐπὶ τὸ πᾶν ὁ θεὸς αὐτῇ κατεχρήσατο ἐκεῖνο διαζωγραφῶν.



well that, in astrological results, [the number twelve] has acquired the greatest power of the things in the heavens, since it is the measure of universal causes. 15

<E. The dialectical–cosmic reading: 45.17–46.17>

The three sides of the [3–4–5 right]-triangle are the first principles of the cosmic shapes. The four is the first principle of the square, which establishes the cube, and which is the seed of earth. The three of the triangle is the one that has engendered the three [other] elements, while 20 the five is the cause of the pentagon that filled up the dodecahedron, by means of which the Demiurge in the *Timaeus* (55c) formed the heavens. Therefore both other wise men and those who study the teachings of the Egyptians are accustomed to call this ‘the cosmic triangle’ – and plausibly so, since it has the first principles of all things and includes 25 them within itself. The numbers which are in it are, each in turn, images of the first causes. The three is an image of Being (*to on*) which is, of course, a mixture of Limit and Unlimit in the primary mode (*prôtôs*), for the unit is Limit, while the dyad is Unlimit – [a number] to which three alone is equal since it results from both [the unit and the dyad] and this alone has the property of being equal to the first principles. The four is 46 the image of life, in the presence of which are motion (since it is dyadic) and rest (since it is tetragonic), for in evenness is rest (*stasis*), in \*\*\*17\*\*\* all motion from \*\*\*15\*\*\* five \*\*\* of the circle \*\*\*13\*\*\* from itself to itself 5 \*\*\*13\*\*\* five times five, and this to infinity. After all, all intellect engages in activity from itself and toward itself. Prior to these, the first principles of all things are the monad and the dyad, one of which is Limit Itself, the other of which is the Unlimit Itself. And prior to these is the One that is the cause of the Limit and the Unlimit, for the unit is a specific one 10 and the dyad, and every number is itself single. Since the five is intellect, in conjunction with the primarily effective (*prôtourgôs*) triad, it made the universal heaven which is composed of eight circles. But in conjunction with the four, it made the cosmos as a whole which is composed of nine circles, adding the region below the Moon as a lemma. And in conjunction with both [the three and the four] it made what is composed of 15 twelve spheres, dividing the sub-lunary into the elements that are in it and attaching all things to the twelve gods, whom Socrates established in the *Phaedrus* (246e) as the leaders for everything within the cosmos.

§36 <Geometric and arithmetic images for the soul: 46.18–54.24>

The circle is an image of intellect, for it *remains* in accordance with its interior, and *proceeds* in accordance with its generative powers, and 20 *reverts* upon itself in accordance with its understanding (*gnôsis*) that encompasses it in a similar fashion everywhere. The [circle’s] centre

is an image of that which is intelligible, partless, and desirable in intellect, while the lines [radiating] from its centre resemble intellect's infinite powers – powers through which it produces all the plurality of intelligibles within itself. The perimeter, however, through which it is rolled up<sup>252</sup> once again into the centre and everywhere embraces it, resembles the intellections that revert toward the One and the intelligible.

But after intellect, which \*\*\*<sup>33</sup>\*\*\* soul is said to move itself<sup>253</sup> <in a secondary way, since>, it is proceeding from intellect, and . . . it is considered [to move] in accordance with its own self-motion. In as much as it [sc. soul] is as an image of intellect, Plato makes it correspond to the *circle* (or rather to *circles*, since it has been allotted an intellectual token (*synthêma*) that is simultaneously dyadic and possessed of faces on both sides).<sup>254</sup> But in as much as the soul is self-moving and self-nourishing, Plato brings it back to the *triangle*. After all, the straight lines imitate life (for all life is motion), to the extent that life – being motion – is something that generally goes out from soul and a flow (*rhysis*) that comes from something that remains [and goes] toward something [else]. And if Life Itself, since it is the measure of every life, is also motion, it is nonetheless a direct motion and thus straight. Since it has triple lives, the soul is therefore defined by three straight lines, and the triples lives it has are intellectual (*noêros*), discursive (*dianoêtikos*), and opinionative (*doxastikos*) – we should not consider the lives as bringing us understanding but rather merely as motions that bring life. Since the angle that comes about when these [vital motions] are unified and rendered entirely connate with one another is an image of unification (*henôsis*),<sup>255</sup> it has produced the triangle as an image of soul. That which is discursive was conjoined to what is

<sup>252</sup> A verb that Proclus has used previously to describe reversion; cf. *in Remp.* I 88.14; 165.18.

<sup>253</sup> Kroll suggests [δεύτερον, ἢ καὶ ὥς] ἀπὸ νοῦ προΐσσοῦσα, καὶ [ὥς κινουμένη θεῶ]ρεῖται. So while the soul *undergoes* motion, it does so as a *self-mover*. But the *kind* of motion that it undergoes – circular motion – is a result of its being an image of intellect.

<sup>254</sup> There is a gap estimated by Kroll to accommodate nine letters ἀμφ . . . πον. Festugière supplies ἀμφ[ιπρόσω]πον on the basis of *in Tim.* II 130.23, along with 246.19 and 293.23. The soul's two circles – that of the Same and the Different – are a token of the goddess Hecate. Of course, Festugière's supplement is three letters short of the estimated gap of nine. Kroll himself proposed ἀμφ[οτέρωσε βλέ]πον on the basis of *Chaldean Oracles* 14 but we do not see a compelling connection with that text. We are satisfied that Festugière is right.

<sup>255</sup> Cf. *in Euc.* 128.26, ff. Proclus equates the way in which angles connect two lines with the Connectors of the *Chaldean Oracles* (fr. 151). In the present context, where Proclus takes the 3–4–5 Pythagorean right-triangle to be the key to the nuptial number, we may perhaps suppose that the angle in question is a right angle, associated with sameness, equality and likeness (*in Euc.* 131.13–15).

intellectual, receiving the motion from it, while that which is opinionative (since it receives the motion from this one in the same manner) has a conjunction with it. Finally, since that which is opinionative has a boundary that derives from intellect, it reverts upon it, conjoining the end to the beginning. Thus, when all these things have been conjoined to one another they bring it about that the entire soul contracts itself,<sup>256</sup> making a triangle.<sup>257</sup>

20

If you wish to consider<sup>258</sup> the Being of this [sc. the soul] in terms of the [number] three, but its Life in terms of four, and its Intellect in terms of five; <you will> in this way also <preserve> the entire image. \*\*\*14\*\*\* <Surely in its> processions it makes itself triangular (for the straight lines are images of the processions in accordance with which the triangle exists, so that it turns out to be a triangular number), being greater in number in this way than the things that are prior to it.<sup>259</sup> Therefore, it is on account of these things that they say that the *triangle* is appropriate (*oikeios*) to the vivific source<sup>260</sup> and cause of all life, as the *circle* is appropriate to the god of crooked counsel<sup>261</sup> who is prior to it – [figures] from which<sup>262</sup> the astrological results proceed.

48

<sup>256</sup> For soul's contraction or withdrawal into itself, see 22.8 above as well as *Plat. Theol.* I 15.24 and 247.15

<sup>257</sup> Compare with the report of Amelius above in §30.

<sup>258</sup> Festugière amends σκοπεῖν το σκόπει (47.23). In 47.25 Kroll posits [τηρήσεις. ἐν μὲν] δὴ ταῖς in the gap following εἰκόνα. In any event, we need some finite verb and we follow Kroll.

<sup>259</sup> On triangular numbers (and other polygonal numbers), see Nicomachus of Gerasa II.8 and d'Ooge (1926), 56.

<sup>260</sup> Festugière invites us to compare in *Tim.* I 96.14 and 111.19 where, in his translation of that work, he supposes Hecate is meant. But see Tarrant in *Tim.* vol. 1 at 5.15 for the Mixing Bowl or *Kratêr* of *Tim.* 41d as an alternative. Given the connection with the soul's triangularity (which is also present at in *Tim.* I 96.14 where the delta of the Nile is said to be analogous to this source of life), we think that *Plat. Theol.* V chap. 32 is probably apposite. Here we find a source of life that is further distinguished into more specific sources: that of souls, of virtues, and of nature.

<sup>261</sup> One of Kronos' customary epithets, *anakyklomêtês*, is treated by Proclus as a symbol of reversion. See below 75.8. It seems likely that Proclus connects *anakyklomêtês* with *anakyklêsis* since the same explanation for Kronos' connection to reversion – contrasted with Zeus' providence – is given at in *Crat.* 62.27–63.1: 'Zeus, in virtue of providence, and this is why his name has been so analysed here (396B): Cronus, in virtue of his turning back to himself (whence he is also termed "crooked-minded").' See also in *Crat.* 66.27.

<sup>262</sup> ὁφ' ὧν καὶ τὰ ἀποτελέσματα πρόεισιν. We take the plural pronoun to refer to the triangle and the circle which serve as symbols of the vivific source and of Kronos. Certainly the circle is highly salient to astrological birth charts, and so is the triangle (even if it is not the only regular figure to determine astrological aspects).

5 Since there are three [sorts of] triangles, the *equilateral* is, as Xenocrates<sup>263</sup> said, devoted to all the divine souls, inasmuch as these have been rendered subordinate to the One; for equality is unity, and it is for this reason that they are called *divine* souls, for the unit is the distinctive feature of divinity. But since the one in souls is not the One Itself, but is instead a one that is participated in by the plurality in these souls,  
10 when the unity becomes equality for the souls that have been rendered divine everywhere and throughout all their lives, it produces the triangle which is equal on all sides. For these reasons they<sup>264</sup> divinise this universe: <representing in an image (*eikazein*)><sup>265</sup> the motions by means of the straight lines, and the conjunctions of the motions by means of the angles.

15 The *isosceles* is devoted to the souls with a daemonic essence (*ousia*) that come after the ones that are divine. In [these daemonic souls] – since they are of an intermediary nature – there is both equality and inequality, as well as both unification and diversity of powers, since the bases are dissimilar to the essences above.<sup>266</sup> Since daemones have contact with

<sup>263</sup> = Xenocrates fr. 223 (Parente). Plutarch's *de def. or.* 416B–C gives a similar correspondence between triangles and divine, daemonic, and human souls, albeit with much more truncated justification:

As an illustration of this subject, Xenocrates, the companion of Plato, employed the order of the triangles; the equilateral he compared to the nature of the gods, the scalene to that of man, and the isosceles to that of the *daemons*; for the first is equal in all its lines, the second unequal in all, and the third is partly equal and partly unequal, like the nature of the *daemons*, which possess human emotions and divine power.

(trans. Babbitt, LCL, vol. 306)

Proclus gives a more general correlation of triangles with 'ranks of being' at *in Euc.* 168.14–25 without reference to Xenocrates. Tarán (1987) doubts that Proclus' elaboration of the basic correlation we find in Plutarch is genuinely Xenocratean. His authority as a companion of Plato has instead been recruited to Proclus' own cause.

<sup>264</sup> As Festugière (150 n. 2) says, the subject of the verb ἐκθεοῦσιν (48.12) is not expressed. He thinks that the subject is 'other wise men and those who study the teachings of the Egyptians' (οἱ τε ἄλλοι σοφοὶ καὶ οἱ τὰ Αἰγυπτίων ἱστοροῦντες, 45.23–4), but this reference seems too many pages removed from the present passage. We believe that the reference is to the divinised souls just mentioned. These souls convert their scalene shape (48.21–49.10) into an equilateral shape when the one in them is divinised by the One itself, and then in turn they can divinise the cosmos through their ascents (equal sides of the triangle) and contemplation of higher entities (the equal angles).

<sup>265</sup> We adopt Festugière's suggestion and add the participle εἰκάζοντες. What is required by the context is that the various aspects of the triangle (its sides and its angles) correspond to features of the universe, and some verb governing the datives denoting likeness must have disappeared.

<sup>266</sup> Presumably this is to be understood in light of the Demiurge's mixture of the divisible and indivisible kinds of Being, Sameness, and Difference in the *Timaeus*. Proclus supposes that the ranks of souls are distinguished by different preponderances not only of the divisible and indivisible gradations, but also by different preponderances

what is inferior to themselves by means of their lowest aspects, but have contact with their superiors by means of their more elevated aspects, it is for this reason that contact assimilates them to [the higher] through equality, but conjoins them to [the lower] through inequality. 20

The third triangle – the *scalene* which is rendered unequal on every side – is an image of souls that ascend and descend, since they are rendered unequal<sup>267</sup> to the beings that are superior and to those that are inferior. By virtue of the movements they undergo, they sometimes cleave to those [that are superior] to a greater degree, sometimes to a lesser degree, and [sometimes to a greater or lesser degree] to those that are inferior, and – what is most extraordinary – that [they also sometimes cleave more, and sometimes less] to one another. Therefore [the triangle] that is unequal on all sides has been assigned to the souls that are everywhere unequal. While the scalene triangle in general is an image of this sort of soul, surely the [scalene] right triangle is the one that is 49 the image for those being carried into or from becoming [and in particular, the right-triangle] which has the base *epitritos* (i.e. 4:3) for the legs at the right angle and the number five for the hypotenuse. This is because it was necessary that the one for them should not be just any triangle of those that are everywhere unequal, but the one that is right 5 angled, since even if they should have the property of being made unequal in their motions, they have been allotted a substance (*ousia*) that is preserved as always the same,<sup>268</sup> and is not receptive of being more or less – which is just the nature of the right angle. This is why it is an image of essential intersection (*ousiôdês synochê*) at every point. Again, it was necessary [in order for this triangle to be an image of souls that ascend and descend] that the sides of the right angle have the ratio 10 of the *epitritos*. This is because the *epitritos* is a middle term between intervals that are concordant and those that are discordant. For if the root of discord were not pre-existent in the essence (*ousia*) of the soul, and only the pure concordance were in it, separation and discord would 15 not be seen within its ways of life or its powers. He [Plato] also made this clear when he said that the Demiurge did not establish the soul's substance out of things completely and utterly pure, as he did with the divine souls (*Tim.* 41d). And if this is so, then the *epitritos* would represent in a truly daemonic manner a composition that is simultaneously concordant and discordant. For that is pure which, due to the beautiful 20

of Being or Sameness as opposed to Difference. Cf. *in Tim.* III 245.13–18 and Baltzly (2009b), 30–1.

<sup>267</sup> There is a play on words here between ἀνισουσῶν and ἀνισουμένων that defies translation.

<sup>268</sup> On Proclus' view, when souls descend into becoming they are changed in their activities or motions, but not in their essence. See Steel (1978).

concordance with itself, remains in its own indestructible essence (*ousia*). As a result, the opposite [sc. impurity and discord] is seen when it risks being infected with the destructive ruin through a decline of its harmonised composition<sup>269</sup> – which is the very thing that Timaeus makes clear when he says that various motions of the circles in us are never entirely destroyed.<sup>270</sup>

Even if all of the concordances are in all souls, perhaps the octave is devoted to divine souls in particular, since truly they possess the most complete<sup>271</sup> of the concordances in an exceptional way in order that, when they are active throughout everything,<sup>272</sup> they preserve all that is rational and concordant in the cosmos. But the musical fifth is devoted to daemones, since it is more complete than the fourth and includes it, but it is inferior to the octave and is included by it. The remaining [interval], the fourth, is devoted to partial souls due to the causes that have been stated. While it is included by both [the fifth and the octave], together with them it fills out the general harmony of the universe. In the same manner, among souls too, the lives that appear very much to be out of tune (*to anarmoston echein*) nonetheless contribute toward the concordant order that runs through everything in the cosmos.<sup>273</sup> Therefore the musical fourth (4:3) has this kind of natural affinity with the essence of partial souls.

The hypotenuse [opposite] the right angle is an image of the universal intellectual life in it [i.e. soul], for five is the first circular number

<sup>269</sup> As in *Tim.* III 259.28–32 makes clear, Proclus supposes that the soul may be impure and discordant in its activities (*energeia*), while remaining pure and harmonised in its essence.

<sup>270</sup> At *Tim.* 43d, Timaeus describes the effects of sensation upon the circles of the embodied soul:

They completely bound that of the Same by flowing against it in the opposite direction, and held it fast just as it was beginning to go its way. And they further shook the orbit of the Different right through, with the result that they twisted every which way the three intervals, the double and the three of the triple, as well as the middle terms of the ratios of 3/2, 4/3, and 9/8 that connect them. [These agitations did not undo them, however,] because *they cannot be completely undone except by the one who bound them together.*

(*Tim.* 43d2–7, trans. Zeyl in Cooper (1997), our emphasis)

The passage is perfect for Proclus' purpose, since it expressly mentions the terms that establish the harmonies within the soul.

<sup>271</sup> See above, 1.213.15 for the octave's special completeness.

<sup>272</sup> ἵνα διὰ πασῶν ἐνεργοῦσαι πάντα ῥητὰ καὶ σύμφωνα τὰ ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ διαφυλάττωσιν. There is no way to translate the full import of the fact that the phrase that refers to the octave, *dia pasōn*, can also mean 'throughout everything'. There is a similar double meaning to 'rational [magnitudes]' (*rhēta*) and 'concordances' (*sympōna*).

<sup>273</sup> Proclus considers the usefulness of unharmonious souls and their evil intentions in his reading of the character of Pandarus in the *Iliad*. See in *Remp.* I. 100.21–106.10.

and is married to intellect.<sup>274</sup> It is through it that the soul is intellect in potentiality and is able to revert upon itself. Therefore while [the partial soul] has the right angle as an image of its essence, since the essence in it is single and bi-formed<sup>275</sup> and the right angle is also single in itself and its single [essence] is in two [lines], showing the fact that its essence is both simple and not simple, having both stability and the \*\*\* due to the inequality of the perpendiculars remaining, and having both the substantial natures of the Same and the Different – being in one respect appropriate to the nature of the One, while in another respect simultaneously ‘one and not one’ (for the circle of the Different is composed of them, but together with division). 15 20

The lines that surround the right angle [are images] of the vivific powers [of the partial souls] – concordant or discordant – that have been distinguished [from one another and arranged] around its single essence.<sup>276</sup> The hypotenuse, by contrast, indicates the intellect within its life that wishes to circulate it [sc. the soul] and move it toward itself and around itself, so that this vital circle that belongs to it should be empowered to be equal to its double life. After all, everything that is 25

<sup>274</sup> Proclus uses ‘cyclic’ to refer to what Nicomachus of Gerasa (*Arith.* II 17.7; cf. Theon, *Util.* 38.16–39.9) calls ‘apostatic’ numbers. Both 5 and 6 are examples, since their powers end in the number at the root. For instance,  $5 \times 5 = 125$ ;  $125 \times 5 = 625$ ; and so on. The idea that 5 in particular is ‘married to intellect’ is harder to fathom. [Iamblichus] *Theology of Arithmetic* identifies 5 with marriage in general, since it is the sum of the first female and male numbers, 2 and 3. But the notion that 5 is married – not marriage – and married to intellect in particular remains mysterious to us. Perhaps it is merely that the circle is an image of intellect and 5 is a circular number. But by the same reasoning, 6 will also be married to intellect. The number 6 is later called ‘marriage’ (*Theol. Ar.* 43.5–9).

<sup>275</sup> In general, this passage needs to be read – to the extent that it *can* be read given the lacuna of undetermined length at 50.16 – against the backdrop of the composition of the soul in the *Timaeus*. Proclus’ understanding of the psychogony stresses the unity of opposites in the soul. It is composed from both divisible and indivisible being. It is single, but composed from both the Circle of the Same and the Circle of the Different. Each of these psychic circles, in turn, is both single and divided into portions representing the various psychic harmonies. Cf. *in Tim.* II 242.14–21:

And if you were to ask me how the soul is single and how it is bi-formed, I would reply that it is single in as much as it is self-moving (for this is common to every psychic life and the parts in it), but that it is bi-formed in virtue of its two-fold lives, the one life involving reversion upon the primary beings, while the other life involves exercising providence over the secondary existences. I should add that it has the one life in virtue of its substantial [nature] (for the soul’s essence is that which moves itself), but that its own life is differentiated into the further two by virtue of the Same and the Different. (trans. Baltzly (2009))

<sup>276</sup> περί τὴν μίαν οὐσίαν αὐτῆς διῷσταμένων· διῷστημι with περί is unusual, but this must be the sense. Cf. *in Euc.* 56.18–20 ἐξελίττων ἑαυτὸν περί τὴν ἀμέρειαν τοῦ ἀληθοῦς νοῦ καὶ διῷστὰς ἑαυτοῦ τὸ ἀδιόστατον τῆς ἀκραιφνοῦς νοήσεως where περί goes with ἐξελίττων, making explicit a linguistic division of labour that seems implicit here.



self-moving has a life that is double *and* single, and the one [soul] that is single is equal to the one that derives from both [aspects of its double life], and since [soul's] essence is also single and double and it is similar-  
 51 ly equal to the double of the life that is single, it is obvious how [soul] is a thing which moves and which is moved and that which results from both, as well as being a 'substantial being' and the 'being substantialised' and that which results from both. It is also clear how these things  
 5 correspond with one another: the hypotenuse which is made equal to the double life represents the [life] which unifies (*henizein*) the double in accordance with its essence. The double [lines],<sup>277</sup> on the other hand, from which the single [line] comes, represent the [lives] which are folded together from two substances into one.

On the basis of these [considerations], the soul appears to be a single  
 10 thing that is bi-formed with respect to both being and life. But on the basis of the *numbers* that result from these things, it appears to be a dyadic number, possessing better and worse powers – some roots and some squares,<sup>278</sup> simpler or more composite (for the numbers of the sides are roots and the numbers that result from them are squares); and some are similar, while others are dissimilar, and some are such as to  
 15 bring about its [i.e. soul's] reversion upon the Same and the One, while others go towards the Different and that which is not one; some increase the wings of the soul, while others diminish them. After all, these wings are nourished by the Good, the Beautiful, and Wisdom, but diminished and destroyed by their opposites.<sup>279</sup> Moreover, the movement of this number into three dimensions embraces the procession of [the soul] from the intelligible and partless to the utmost limit of things that are solid. For when it is on high and has been stretched toward intellect, then, after indivisible intellectual Being,<sup>280</sup> the soul is the first interval

<sup>277</sup> As Festugière observes, ζῶων (lives) in 51.7 must be a mistake. What is needed is not one of the objects which the geometrical image describes (whether souls or ways of life) but an aspect of the diagram. This is evident from the symmetrical structure of the sentence, which hangs both of these aspects of the diagram from the participle ἐνεικονιζομένων in 51.4–5. We would add that this is very likely a well-intentioned but mistaken marginal gloss which has intruded into the text.

<sup>278</sup> τὰς μὲν δυναμένας τὰς δὲ δυναστευομένας; cf. 36.8 above with notes. Proclus returns at this point to the explicit terminology of calculation of the nuptial number at *Rep.* 546b5–7 but now characterises the mathematical vocabulary in more symbolic terms.

<sup>279</sup> Cf. *Phdr.* 246e1–3. The mathematical terminology of addition or multiplication in *Rep.* 546b5–7 (αὐξόντων καὶ φθινόντων) is here assimilated to the biological sense of increase or growth involved in the re-growth of the soul's wings.

<sup>280</sup> ἄνω μὲν γὰρ οὐσα καὶ πρὸς νοῦν τεταμένη μετὰ τὴν ἀμέρειαν τὴν νοερὰν τὸ πρῶτόν ἐστι διάστημα. The sense is very unclear, but μετὰ τὴν ἀμέρειαν τὴν νοερὰν invites οὐσίαν as understood. If this is so, then Proclus perhaps has in mind the indivisible intellectual Being (and Sameness and Difference) from which the Demiurge blends the soul in



and it is straight due to the procession. But it is also this circle in as much as the line is turned around due to reversion. When it goes into itself, it is rendered two-dimensional and, being arrested at the point of discursive thought, makes itself square, yet preserves Sameness and Similarity in its discursive motions by virtue of the fact that it is being moved from thought to thought. However, when it intermingles opinion with discursive thought, it is moved with a planar motion which, on the one hand, comes about as a result of two powers [or roots] being mixed together, but, since these powers are unequal, this elongates it from itself.<sup>281</sup> The planes then add a third dimension<sup>282</sup> when they flow into the things that come after it [sc. discursive thought],<sup>283</sup> cubing the rectilinear life and engendering imagination (*phantasia*) (for imagination is a kind of internal, passive intellect that, whilst wishing to be active, is weakened due to its fall into what is solid). The [other] oblong life, by a corresponding procession, settles down into dissimilar solids and engenders perception, since this is understanding (*gnôsis*) that results from things that are dissimilar – body and what is incorporeal – and it is rendered incapable of [understanding] itself. When these forms of life are mixed together in the realm of generation and better things are interwoven with worse ones, bi-formed *harmonies* are produced. One is restorative (*apokatastatikos*) and allied to the circle of the Same, while the other is akin to the [circle of the] Different and allied to becoming.<sup>284</sup> The one hundred and the ten thousand are of course square [harmonies], since they are related to Sameness and lead back to the Similar and to the divine (for as he himself showed in the *Phaedrus*

*Tim.* 35a. Since in the mixing the Demiurge combines the indivisible Being with the kind of Being that is divisible around bodies, one might consider that the soul is the first interval – i.e. the first thing that we can think of to have anything at all analogous to dimensionality.

<sup>281</sup> We seem to be invited to imagine the powers of opinion and the discursive as the sides of an oblong plane figure – perhaps it is opinion that is less potent and thus unequal and it thus forms the shorter side. Proclus is allegorising the text of *Rep.* 546b5–7 in terms of the soul's descent: ἐν ᾧ πρώτῳ αὐξήσεις **δυνάμεναι** τε καὶ δυναστευόμεναι, τρεῖς ἀποστάσεις, τέτταρας δὲ ὅρους λαβοῦσαι **ὁμοιούντων τε καὶ ἀνομοιούντων**. Though it is not transparently clear from the *men ... de* of 52.2–3, we are also to imagine that the powers of *dianoia* and *doxa* considered simply as *dynameis* or roots generate another rectilinear plane figure. These two plane figures go on to generate *phantasia* (square) and *aisthêsis* (oblong) at lines 5 and 8 below.

<sup>282</sup> βαθύνω LSJ A.2 with reference to this passage. See also in *Euc.* 87.9.

<sup>283</sup> εἰς δὲ τὰ μετ' αὐτὴν ῥέπουσα. We think the feminine αὐτὴν goes back to *dianoia*, but presumably *doxa* (opinion) is also a possibility. After all, understanding 'it' as discursive reason makes better sense of the claim that imagination is a kind of passive intellect than supposing that 'it' refers to opinion.

<sup>284</sup> These harmonies are the numbers elicited from Proclus' reading of *Rep.* 546b–c in the previous section: 10,000 (or 100<sup>2</sup>) and 7,500 (or 75×100).

(248e8), the soul is restored to the intelligible from becoming through  
 20 a period of ten thousand years). The five that is together with the seven-  
 ty and the numbers that correspond to these among the multiples of one  
 hundred and one thousand – i.e. five thousand and seven thousand –  
 represent the Different's opposite and generation-producing (*genesour-*  
 25 *gos*) cycle since they result from sides that are different and unequal,  
 rectangular and oblong. For there is a route (*bodos*) from the intelligible  
 to the intelligible and [another one] from becoming toward becoming  
 for souls. The one is devoted to the elevating gods, while the other is  
 devoted to the generation-producing gods. The former is dedicated to  
 the angels who dissolve the matter, while the latter is dedicated to those  
 53 who oversee the descents [of souls]. The numbers that are expressive of  
 these routes are dedicated to these orders, just as in the case of the cir-  
 cles in the soul, one belongs to the [circle of the] Same, the other to the  
 [circle of the] Different. But<sup>285</sup> it is necessary that, just as there are  
 guides for each [of these routes], there is also one leader (*prostatês*) for  
 the two combined who understands the way up and the way down and  
 5 understands the two-fold life of both fertility and sterility in the realm  
 of becoming. And if it is requisite to pay heed to my own prophetic vi-  
 sion,<sup>286</sup> it is necessary to suppose that this leader is none other than  
 Prometheus, whom Plato says in the *Protagoras* (320d) is the overseer of  
 human life, just as Epimetheus is the overseer of irrational life.<sup>287</sup> Or-  
 10 pheus and Hesiod (*Theog.* 565) too, through the theft of fire and its gift  
 to human beings, indicate that the soul descends into becoming from  
 the intelligible, in as much as he rules over the human cycle and over  
 better or worse births. So in order that we may again make the entire  
 thought clear, [let us say that] since the cycle of partial souls is two-fold,  
 15 with one that goes from the intelligible to the intelligible and another  
 that goes from becoming toward becoming, he called each of these a  
 harmony on the grounds that in both cases there is no destruction of  
 the essence that is appropriate [to that aspect of the soul], since they  
 have been allocated the sort of composition that is rendered harmoni-  
 20 ous with ascents and descents. But he called the cycle from intelligible  
 to intelligible a square [number] (and 10,000 is such) and [the cycle]

<sup>285</sup> 53.2–12 = *Orph. fr.* 143 (Kern) and 352 (Bernabe). Cf. Damascius, in *Phdo* §170 where Damascius relates three possible interpretations of Prometheus' theft of fire. The second of these ('that he leads the soul into the body') seems to coincide with Proclus' reading of this episode here.

<sup>286</sup> εἰ δεῖ τῇ ἐμῇ μαντείᾳ προσέχειν. Cf. in *Tim.* II. 169.3, 252.9, 256.20.

<sup>287</sup> For Proclus' more extended interpretation of the story related by Protagoras, see *Plat. Theol.* V chap. 24. In that passage too, Prometheus is regarded as having a special providence over rational lives: προνοοῦντα τῆς λογικῆς ἡμῶν ζωῆς (V. 87.23–4).

from becoming to becoming an oblong number,<sup>288</sup> in which [cycle] the 100 once again remains, but since it [i.e. the cycle from becoming to becoming] does not go into itself,<sup>289</sup> it made the former period [intelligible to intelligible] the superior restorative one, but when it [i.e. the lower cycle, [becoming to becoming] is co-arranged with another number it puts forth another form of life and is lessened by the square of 5 – and such a number is irrational, not only because it has been deprived of circular reversion upon itself (such as that [reversion] which occurs from 5 since, being a circular number, it both originates from itself and terminates in itself), but because 5 is also sacred to Justice, for it alone equalises<sup>290</sup> the numbers from 1 to 9 (justice being something that what is irrational *simpliciter* has no share in) – therefore, then, the 100, when it is multiplied by the number less than itself by the [square] that results from 5, makes the cycle from becoming and toward becoming. After all, this cycle itself comes about by the addition of an inferior life. In addition to the fact that it is itself a number that belongs to the same family as the sort of life that exists in becoming, there is the fact

<sup>288</sup> In general terms, we take Proclus to be allegorically playing with the numbers that make up the two harmonies (7,500 and 10,000) and equating the latter with the cycle that goes from intelligibles to intelligibles. 100 appears as the common ‘side’ or factor in both numbers. In making the one harmony, it does not ‘go into itself’ and thus does not become planar. It remains like a line, albeit one that is circular since it goes ‘from intelligibles to intelligibles’ (cf. 51.24–5 where the soul, prior to descending to discursive thought, is both straight and circular since it both proceeds and reverts). Since *noêsis* is prior to *dianoia* and concerns the intelligible, Proclus then says that, by not going into itself, it made one of the two cycles: that from intelligibles to intelligibles. But 100 is also a factor in the other harmony, 7,500. Proclus uses verbs that have both a mathematical sense and the sense of decline or dropping off or subtraction to convey a sense of hierarchy. What the 100 is lessened by is  $5 \times 5$ , so now we are dealing with the other harmony, corresponding to the other cycle from becoming to becoming. We should envision this harmony as a number having one side as 75 and the other as a new expanded and lower-level 100. Proclus digresses on the fittingness of  $5^2$  as the number that, subtracted from the side of the noetic square, gives us a side that is relevant to numerical ruminations on justice.

In spite of the presence of  $\delta'$  we take  $\eta \delta' \text{ οὖν ἑκατοντάς}$  at 54.2 to be Proclus taking up the line of thought about the role of 100 in these two harmonies, and their corresponding cycles, begun at 53.23 after he has interrupted his original train of thought.

<sup>289</sup> ἀλλ' οὐκ εἰς ἑαυτὴν εἰσιούσα; cf. supra 51.26 where the other pathway does go into itself (εἰσιούσα δὲ εἰς ἑαυτὴν ἐπιπεδοῦται).

<sup>290</sup> Cf. [Iamblichus] *Theol. Arith.* 39.11–24. Five’s special relation to Justice is exhibited in the fact that it ‘equalises things’ between numbers that get more and those that get less. So take 4, which is one short of the midpoint of the decad and 9 which is the number furthest on the ‘excessive’ side of the midpoint. Subtract 4 from 9. The result is 5 – the midpoint. Similarly take 8 (who is a bit less greedy than 9) and 3 (who is a bit less well fed than 4). Subtract 3 from 8. The result is again 5 – the midpoint and pivot of the ‘scales of Justice’.

that it is the result of two [numbers] one of which is a cube, while the other is composed of unequal sides.<sup>291</sup> This is surely also the reason why what is essentially irrational possesses, on the one hand, that which is better and a kinship with Sameness, but on the other hand also possesses what is worse and an affinity with Difference. Moreover, in the case of the 100, there was also [one number with] the cubic form and another that was the product of dissimilar [numbers]. But even the one that was the product of dissimilar numbers was, in another fashion, shown to be a square resulting from the very first Perfect Number, and from both he made the entire square [number].<sup>292</sup> This is also why, in the case of that which possesses reason, since the Different is united with the Same into a single likeness, it shares in reversion upon itself, whilst not departing from the nature that is appropriate to incorporeal things. But the Different in what is irrational leads the Same in it to unlikeness of the whole with itself, [which unlikeness] is fitting for powers that are generation-producing. For Likeness is appropriate to things that are purely incorporeal, while Unlikeness is appropriate to things that are inseparable from bodies. Where the cube surpasses what is not a cube, the Same similarly surpasses among things that are incorporeal. But where what is not a cube surpasses what is a cube, the Different does likewise among things that are corporeal. All these things are in tune (*synaidein*) with one another.

§37 <The relation of astrology to the opportune moment for conceptions:  
54.25–64.4>

If there is this number, then it is both made manifest in the universe and brought to completion by the [astrological] configurations<sup>293</sup> and motions that are in it, since things that are general or universal are

<sup>291</sup> Cf. above 37.10–16 where the 75 is the sum of the 27 and the 48 in the geometric proportion  $27 : 36 : 48 : 64$ . While 27 is  $3^3$  (and thus has equal sides), 48 is conceived of as  $3 \times 4 \times 4$ .

<sup>292</sup> Proclus now turns his attention to 100 conceived of as the sum of the other terms in the geometric proportion; i.e.  $36 + 64$ . 48 was previously downgraded to the irrational and the realm of becoming because it was not a cube, like 27. Given Proclus' means of constructing the two means between cubes, 36 is similarly composed from unequal sides:  $3 \times 3 \times 4$ . But it is redeemed by the fact that it is also  $6^2$  and 6 is a Perfect Number. Hence the harmony that corresponds to the cycle that goes from intelligibles to intelligibles (i.e.  $100^2$ ) is superior to the other that has been correlated with becoming ( $75 \times 100$ ).

<sup>293</sup> *Schêmatismos* is a technical term in astrology for the astrological configurations that planets make with one another (involving geometrical aspects). Thus the number includes such arrangements (*schêmata*) and the movements of planets and stars DGG.

always the leaders of things that are particular or partial.<sup>294</sup> And this was stated previously:<sup>295</sup> that this number is rendered consubstantial both within the partial souls – for they live in accordance with it [sc. the number] – and within the universe which produces the cycles of fertility and sterility; just as each of the ways of life (e.g. being a philosopher) is both in the souls themselves and in the corresponding configuration of the universe, so too is each of the other [traits].<sup>296</sup> If, as I was saying, it is therefore possible to see this double number that has control over better or worse births within the cosmos, then it is necessary for the rulers who look to the universe to make their judgements on the matters concerning the consummations of marriages to do so through the things that are visible, determining which cosmic order is productive of a better life and which order is productive of a worse one. The Fate that includes the numbers [of these lives] shows their differences through the motions that are visible to the eye. The question of whether these are merely signs of things to come or whether they are things that are brought about in cooperation with the souls (because Fate makes the parts after the whole) does not matter for present purposes.<sup>297</sup> Instead it is merely necessary for the rulers who have authority over the consummations to be clear-sighted when it comes to the times for procreation to see if these times have a preponderance of better or worse numbers. After all, the configurations of the cosmos at the time of birth follow upon those at the time of conception, and the lives of those born follow

<sup>294</sup> τῶν ὅλων προηγούμενων ἀεὶ τῶν μερῶν. What is at issue is the ontological priority of what is more general to what is less so, but no simple English translation conveys the duality of completeness and generality that goes with τῶν ὅλων or the duality of particularity and lack of completeness or partiality that goes with τῶν μερῶν.

<sup>295</sup> Kroll supposes the reference is to 48.21 but it is not easy to see how that passage is particularly apposite. In that stretch of text, Proclus reports the view of Xenocrates relating human souls that ascend and descend to the scalene triangle, while aligning daemonic souls with the isosceles and divine ones with the equilateral. The language of συνουσιωμένος is nowhere to be found in that passage. The general sense is tolerably clear: there is a human number that is somehow both within human souls and also encoded into the stellar configurations that are responsible for the good or bad births that result from souls entering becoming (i.e. being conceived) at that particular point in time.

<sup>296</sup> καὶ ἕκαστος τῶν ὅλων is puzzling and Kroll notes ‘αὐτὸν ἕκαστον αὐτὸν ὅλων pro ὅλων’, which is to say that either the word ἕκαστος should be ἕκαστον or the word ὅλων (‘of others’) should replace ὅλων (‘of wholes/universals’). We think that ὅλων is the problem. The scribal error (ὅλων for ὅλων) is easily explained by the use of the word ὅλου in the same line just a few words before it. The point here is that our ways of life and other personal traits are present both in our very souls and before that in the stars as well. The signs of the zodiac and other astral bodies influence us.

<sup>297</sup> See Porphyry 271F, 43, ff. on the contrast in the ways in which astrological facts are related to what occurs. Porphyry’s view is that the astrological facts are signs – not causes – of that which will come about. Cf. Greenbaum (2018), 130.

upon these,<sup>298</sup> becoming either better or worse, and becoming like or unlike those of their parents, so that it is possible for there to be a change in the political order. Of course, not every kind of unlikeness involves a departure from the better life (for it is not impossible for  
 25 there to be some difference in disposition [between lives that are both superior ones]), but where it would involve wholesale alteration [there is such a departure].<sup>299</sup> Now in one [family] the children are generally  
 56 born similar to their parents, with some dissimilarity too. Nonetheless when they are born wholly unlike, then at that point the distinguishing features of the family are completely altered and some derived from a philosophical family become unphilosophical, or some derived from  
 5 those who are religious come to be impious, and similarly in other cases. Since he knew this fact, he said that even in the golden race there are some born who belong to the race of bronze (*Rep.* 415b). This does not suffice, however, to identify a cause for the dissolution of the political order – that some one child like this is born. [But it is sufficient] when there are many, and none of them are fit for the golden race, following significant mutation due to error concerning the consummation of marriages. (This is a mistake that it is likely for the rulers to make when it is not merely by means of reasoning, but also through the use of perception (*Rep.* 546b), that they arrive at a judgement about the appropriate time for fertility.) Then and not before<sup>300</sup> it is necessary that the beginning of the dissolution [of the political order] be set in motion and that the cycle (*periodos*) [of the heavenly bodies] simultaneously  
 10 contribute to the error.  
 15

It is requisite, then, that those who have authority over the marriages pursue the appropriate time for them: first,<sup>301</sup> with reference to the sphere of the *fixed stars* through both the ascendants<sup>302</sup> and the stars

<sup>298</sup> Hellenistic and late antique astrology is generally genethliological astrology that treats the moment of *birth* as the important one for horoscopic purposes. While there are some texts that assign importance to the moment of *conception*, they are far less common than those that work with the positions of signs and planets at birth. See n. 188 above. Proclus' emphasis on the moment of conception in what follows is presumably determined by the role of the guardians in determining when to hold the marriage festivals that produce future generations of rulers. Cf. Beck (2007), 9.

<sup>299</sup> παμπόλλην ἔχη τὴν ἐξαλλαγὴν. Perhaps Proclus means to recall Plato's punning use at *Rep.* 422e8 ἐκάστη γὰρ αὐτῶν πόλεις [sc. the ones that are not the ideal city] εἰσι πάμπόλλαι ἀλλ' οὐ πόλις.

<sup>300</sup> See ἡδη LSJ 4d.

<sup>301</sup> κατὰ μὲν τὴν ἀπλανῆ is only answered by μετὰ δὲ τὰς τῶν ἀπλανῶν κατανοήσεις τὰς τῶν πλανωμένων 20 lines later at 57.12.

<sup>302</sup> *Hōroskopos* – the sign or degree of a sign of the zodiac that is rising at the time of birth.

that co-rise (*ta paranatellonta*)<sup>303</sup> with them, as well as the decans<sup>304</sup> – for the horoscopic degrees contain the whole power of genesis, in as much as they have the power to make some born to lives that are sanctified, while others who are right beside them are born to lives of infamy.<sup>305</sup> (These things are contained in the Chaldean and Egyptian spheres<sup>306</sup> on the basis of which<sup>307</sup> the ancients judge what will be the way of life (*bios*) of souls entering into the realm of generation with those ascendants, just as they judge the quality of the way of life from the figures (*schêma*) and from the co-rising stars, as well as from the distinctive characteristic of the stars in their aspects relative to the horoscopic degrees.) The powers of the co-rising [stars] include wholesale the powers for both fertility and sterility. Now among these powers of the co-rising stars, surely some are good and such as to produce an easy life among those nativities,<sup>308</sup> but the malefic powers send down effluences<sup>309</sup> of the opposite kind to those that fall under their power.<sup>310</sup> Of course, this is also what the astrologers look to when they distinguish some celestial bodies among the stars as generally benefics, some as malefics, and

<sup>303</sup> These are fixed stars that simultaneously rise with planets or zodiacal points like the ascendant. The significance of these *paranatellonta* is the focus of a treatise by Teucer of Babylon (first century C.E.) DGG. (Notes bearing the initials DGG we owe to the expert advice of Dorian Gieseler Greenbaum.)

<sup>304</sup> Each sign of the zodiac takes up 30 degrees of the 360-degree circle. The decans are three 10 degree sub-divisions within each sign.

<sup>305</sup> As Festugière notes, the issue in the background is that of twins who, being born under the same stars, would seem to have the same fortune. But of course this seldom turns out to be true. The astrologers' solution is to appeal to the slight changes in stellar positions that occur between the birth of one child and the next. Cf. Vettius Valens 245.22–6 (Kroll), with specific reference to small sub-divisions of the ascendant sign such as the decans that Proclus has mentioned here.

<sup>306</sup> The so-called 'sphaera barbarica' are a genre of *paranatellonta* writing that may treat Greek and foreign constellations that co-rise together or they may (as in the case of Nigidius Figulus) segregate Greek and foreign constellations into different chapters. For the history of the term see Boll (1903), 363–7.

<sup>307</sup> With Festugière we move the closing parenthesis to the end of this sentence in order that ὅφ' ὧν might have σφαίραις as its object rather than the μοῖραι ὠροσκοποῦσαι that would be required on Kroll's punctuation.

<sup>308</sup> ἐν ταῖς γενέσεσιν. It is very common in astrological texts to refer to a 'nativity' in this way, to mean the person who has that birth chart, e.g. 'nativities with Venus and Jupiter conjunct produce abundance' (vel sim.) DGG.

<sup>309</sup> *aporroia*: *effluvium*. The term indicates, in general, the influence of the star itself: it is derived from an incessant *effluvium*, *in-fluxus*, which the stars pour out through physical necessity from their orbits, in a cascade, from the higher sphere to the lower' Bezza (2005), 281–2.

<sup>310</sup> τοῖς ὑπ' αὐτῶν δυνάστευομένοις. See n. 314, below.



some as being both.<sup>311</sup> Among these, one must think that the effluences in what co-rises in particular produce the greatest variation among the time periods that are fertile and favourable for birth, but generally one must also think about [the effluences from the other *paranatellonta*] in the case of the other [astrological] centres<sup>312</sup> – for instance, in the case of culminating simultaneously (*symmesouranein*) or setting together.<sup>313</sup>

Along with the observations (*katanoêsis*) of the fixed stars, there will be a need to consider the motions of the *planets* in the fertile periods and to see which are the ones in power and which are subject to power<sup>314</sup> in terms of the numbers discussed before, since there is a need for the selection to be made among those that have beneficial powers, those that are subject to the opposite powers, and, again, those

<sup>311</sup> τίνα μὲν τῶν ἀστρῶν ἀστέρας ἔχει πάντας ἀγαθοποιούς, τίνα δὲ κακωτικούς, τίνα δὲ συναμφοτέρους. ἀγαθοποιῶν and κακοποιῶν are established astrological terminology traditionally translated as the nouns ‘benefics’ and ‘malefics’; cf. Ptolemy, *Tetr* I.5. Generally speaking, it is *planets* that are malefics or benefics – not stars. Thus Beck (2007), 76–9 lists Jupiter and Venus as benefics, Saturn and Mars as malefics, while Mercury is ambivalent. This makes Proclus’ terminology – τίνα μὲν τῶν ἀστρῶν ἀστέρας – somewhat puzzling. He could have said ‘some *planets* among the stars ...’ But on the other hand, we are still in the scope of the κατὰ μὲν τὴν ἀπλανῆ at 56.16 and we won’t shift to a discussion of what the guardians must observe in relation to the planets until 57.12. Ptolemy, *Tetr*. I.9 assigns powers like those of the planets to *individual* stars *within* the constellations, as well as to stars in constellations outside the Zodiac, such as Ursa Major. So perhaps that is one possible explanation.

<sup>312</sup> The ‘centres’ refer to the four cardinal points that are used in the calculation of a nativity. The first is now called the Ascendant (Asc) and it refers to the degree of the sign that is rising above the eastern horizon in the place of birth at the time of that birth. In diagrams it is generally positioned at nine o’clock to show that it is on the horizon. The second is the Midheaven or MC (the point at which the arc of longitude that passes through the observer’s zenith intersects the ecliptic). The third is the setting point, descendant or *occusus*. This is the sign on the ecliptic which is setting, and in horoscopic diagrams it is usually depicted opposite the Asc at three o’clock. The fourth is the IC or *imum coeli* where the other half of the meridian intersects the ecliptic opposite from the MC. See Beck (2007), 26–8.

<sup>313</sup> Proclus seems to be distinguishing the stars that literally co-rise, that is with the ascendant, as opposed to the ones that co-culminate, co-set, and anti-culminate. These too are generally called *paranatellonta*. As an example, in the 379 C.E. ‘Treatise on the Bright Fixed Stars’ (CCAG V/1, 194–211), the first section talks about stars that co-culminate, co-set, and co-anti-culminate, and their effects DGG.

<sup>314</sup> τίνες οἱ δυνάμενοι καὶ τίνες οἱ δυναστευόμενοι. As he did in the previous section, Proclus now gives the mathematical terminology of *Rep*. 546b5 (ἐν ᾧ πρῶτω αὐξήσεις δυνάμεναι τε καὶ δυναστευόμεναι) an astrological sense where earlier it had the sense of ‘arithmetic roots and squares’. In this case, he bends the terminology of benefics and malefics to conform with the mathematical language of Plato’s text: καὶ τῶν μὲν ἀγαθοποιῶν δυνάμενων, δυναστευομένων δὲ τῶν ἐναντίων. The terminology of δυναστεύοντα occurs reasonably frequently in Hephastion of Thebes (early fifth century C.E.) in his *Apotelesmatica* but it does not seem to have quite this meaning.



having no [relevant powers] at all. Furthermore, there is also a need to see which configurations (*schēmatismoi*) are assimilative and which are those that are non-assimilative,<sup>315</sup> for among the figures (*schēmata*), some are consonant and are called ‘assimilative’ due to this fact, while others are lacking in concord and due to this fact are called ‘non-assimilative’. The triangles (trines) are concordant, while the squares (quadrature) are lacking in concord.<sup>316</sup> Accordingly, it is necessary for those that are assimilative of the benefics to be chosen in relation both to the time for procreation and in relation to one another. Moreover, it is requisite to observe closely the increase and growth in terms of the waxing and waning numbers. In the case of the Moon, in as much as it waxes, it is especially necessary to observe the nativities among the productive days and increasing numbers.<sup>317</sup> And in the case of the planets, one must consider the additive and subtractive periods, for as much as the benefics provide when they are in prograde, they destroy when they are in retrograde. In the case of the Sun, one needs to observe the increases in its light instead of the opposite [decreases], for when it goes toward the meridian, it adds to the light and when it is carried away from the meridian towards its setting, the power of the light is lessened. But when it is stationary at the meridian, the vivific centre itself, it displays the full height of its illuminations.

One must observe not only this, but it is necessary to also look to the differences among the semi-circles of the circle of the Zodiac and the fact that one is productive of births (the semi-circle that goes from

<sup>315</sup> οἱ ὁμοιοῦντες σχηματισμοὶ καὶ τίνες οἱ ἀνομοιοῦντες. As before, Proclus bends Plato’s τέτταρας δὲ ὅρους λαβούσαι ὁμοιοῦντων τε καὶ ἀνομοιοῦντων καὶ αὐξόντων καὶ φθινόντων at *Rep.* 545b6–7 to give it an astrological resonance, probably relating to ‘aspects’ such as trine or sextile. Proclus may be stretching the vocabulary a bit, but perhaps not as much as in the case of δυνάμενοι and δυνάστευόμενοι. For instance, Paulus Alexandrinus uses words like ‘harmonious’ (*sympbhōnos*) applied to ‘the side of a triangle’ (trine) and a hexagon (sextile) (*Eisag.* ch. 10) but not all sextiles are equally ‘harmonious’ – they are most effective when in signs that hear or see one another (see also ch. 8). An opposition on the other hand is ‘inharmonious’ (*Scholion* for ch. 8) and squares produce outcomes that are ‘discordant’ and ‘irregular’ DGG.

<sup>316</sup> On trine and quadrature aspects, see Beck (2007), 40–1.

<sup>317</sup> As before, Proclus is suggesting an astrological sense for Plato’s mathematical terminology: καὶ αὐξόντων καὶ φθινόντων. Some connection between the Moon and fertility is common (cf. Ptolemy, *Tetr.* IV.6.1), but the specific terminology that Proclus uses (ἐν ταῖς αὐξητικαῖς ἡμέραις καὶ τοῖς ἀναβατικαῖς ἀριθμοῖς) finds no exact correlates in astrological texts. The adjective ἀναβατικός is rare in Neoplatonic writers, occurring in the context of the allegory of the Cave of the Nymphs in Porphyry and in Numenius in relation to the gates of the tropics where souls ascend or descend. Earlier at 44.7 Proclus uses it to modify ‘places’, describing the rising and setting points of the Moon. But here perhaps it means merely that when it is waxing and fast in motion, this increases the ability for births/engendering DGG.

Capricorn), while the other is such as to lessen them (the one that goes  
 10 from Cancer), for in the former, the light increases, while in the latter it  
 diminishes. The entire annual circle is divided into growth and diminution  
 and it is for this reason that the circle of the Moon's phases is said  
 to represent (*eneikonizein*) the annual course of the Sun. In any event,  
 15 observing the correspondence between the two, Orpheus<sup>318</sup> says that  
 'the Moon produces (*trephein*) in one month that which the Sun does  
 in a year'. The principle (*logos*) that rules according to the Egyptians is  
 that each of the five planets brings affliction in the fertile [periods] by  
 destroying the seeds: Saturn in the first month of the pregnancy, Jupiter  
 20 in 60 days, Mars in 90 days, Venus in 120, and Mercury in 150 days.<sup>319</sup>  
 Thus also the Moon, having become unpropitious like Saturn, dissolves  
 the embryo into its previous nature.<sup>320</sup> The Sun alone welds together  
 the composite of these [pre-existing ingredients] and helps to bring it  
 to birth since it has the powers of all of them [sc. the planets]. For  
 among the three [planets] above the Sun, the prograde and retrograde  
 25 motions<sup>321</sup> are in trine relative to the Sun. It is for this reason that the  
 triangle is the first principle of birth, for which the Sun is the Master,  
 while among these three [planets above the Sun], one is the cause of  
 formation, the other of dissolution, and the third of the symmetry be-  
 30 tween both of them.<sup>322</sup> Among the planets that go with the Sun, some  
 [sc. Venus and Mercury] attend upon the Sun like a bodyguard, while  
 the other [sc. the Moon] dances around it, undergoing motion away  
 from the Sun and toward it. The Egyptian school of Petosiris and Zo-  
 roaster maintain – and Ptolemy concurs – that the ascendant at the  
 5 time of conception comes to be the place of the Moon at birth, while

<sup>318</sup> 58.13–15 = *Orph. fr.* 82 (Kern) and fr. 352 (Bernabe). Cf. Proclus, in *Tim.* III 56.4.

<sup>319</sup> Cf. Frommhold (2004), 224; Wilberding (2017), 87.

<sup>320</sup> It is also possible that the phrase εἰς τὴν προυποκειμένην φύσιν goes not with 'dissolves' but with 'become unpropitious': 'Thus the Moon, having become unpropitious, similarly to Saturn in [his] pre-existing nature, dissolves the embryo.'

<sup>321</sup> προσθαφαίρες. Neugebauer's note in Festugière argues for understanding this as πρόσθεσις καὶ ἀφαίρεσις on the basis of Ptolemy, *Synt.* IV.9. We go beyond merely 'addition and subtraction' in our translation since the context makes it tolerably clear what is at issue. Mars, Saturn, and Jupiter (the planets above the Sun) make a trine (a triangle in astrologers' terminology) at the time of their direct and retrograde stations, forming a 120-degree aspect to the Sun.

<sup>322</sup> Cf. Bouché-Leclercq (1899), 93–7 for the various properties associated with these three planets in Hellenistic astrology. On the basis of these varied associations, we think it likely that Proclus takes Saturn to be associated with formation, Mars with division (cf. 62.1 below), with the ruling Jupiter (Zeus) as the one who establishes the appropriate symmetry between these opposing forces.

the Moon's place at conception comes to be the ascendant at birth.<sup>323</sup> If this is true, then someone who knows where the Moon was at the time of conception is also able to know the ascendant at birth and *vice versa*. Understanding these matters, one needs to consider whether the delivery occurs at seven months or at nine months<sup>324</sup> and how and in how many ways each of the two is produced, so that one may thus know in advance<sup>325</sup> the nativities of those that have been conceived. In the case of nine-month pregnancies, the offspring come into existence at the left square of the Sun in the birthchart<sup>326</sup> (for it was at that point at conception), but in the case of seven-month pregnancies it is in opposition. Nine-month pregnancies are completed, in the case of a longer gestation, in 288 days and 8 hours, while the average ones are completed in 273 days and 8 hours, and the shorter ones in 258 days and 8 hours. Seven-month pregnancies are completed in 206 days<sup>327</sup> and 8 hours for the longer ones, while the average one is completed in 191 days and 8 hours, and the shortest one takes 176 days and 8 hours. Thus taking the time of conception, they discover from this what the features are for a nine-month pregnancy and what they are for a seven-month one.

Again, [they calculate it] thusly: when they have observed the day of conception and the day of the conjunction [of the Sun and Moon]<sup>328</sup> prior to it, then, taking the degrees between them together with one third of this [number], they project [this many days] from the new moon *prior* to the time of conception. If that number exceeds the [number of days to] the new moon that comes *after* the conception, then they say it will be a seven-month pregnancy, but if the number is found to be smaller, they say that it will be a nine-month pregnancy. For example, suppose that there were 30 degrees between the time of the new moon prior to the conception and the time of the conception itself. Take this figure along with one third, which yields 40. Project as many days as there are degrees from the preceding full moon. Since that number exceeds the number of days to the new moon following the moment of conception, the birth that will take place will be a nine-month one.

<sup>323</sup> For the 'rule of Petosiris' correlating lunar and solar positions at conception and birth see Frommhold (2004). The Ptolemy in question is ps-Ptolemy, *Centil.* 51.

<sup>324</sup> See above 32.10–34.3 on the various lengths of pregnancy.

<sup>325</sup> We read προεγνωεῖν with Festugière and Kroll for the manuscripts' προσεγνωεῖν.

<sup>326</sup> So, if the birth Sun is, say, 10 Aries, the conception happens at 10 Cancer. Festugière's translation ('les conceptions ont lieu dans l'aspect quadrat gauche du Soleil de l'accouchement') relies on Otto Neugebauer's explanatory note, but Frommhold disagrees; cf. 2004, 56 n.171 DGG.

<sup>327</sup> The manuscript reads 216, but we amend with Festugière in light of Neugebauer (1963).

<sup>328</sup> In effect, the new moon and we will translate accordingly from here.

10 But if you took a smaller number of degrees, say 15, and a third [of this number] then you would project as many days from the day of the previous new moon. [In this case,] the number will fall short of the [number of days until] the new moon will come after the time of conception. Therefore one ought to think that the offspring that will be born under this ascendant<sup>329</sup> will be nine-months.

15 Others, however, having taken the times of birth and of conception, take the new moon prior to the time of conception and the time when conception took place. Then they inscribe a right triangle like this,<sup>330</sup> putting the right [angle] at the degree [of the sign that is ascendant at conception] and in the case of each [of the two sides of the right angle], putting the one [side] upright at 90 degrees, while the side after that is of 120 ... the one of 150 [as the hypotenuse].<sup>331</sup> After that, when they  
20 discover the degree for the ascendant of the new moon prior to the conception, they consider on what side of the triangle of conception [this point on the circle] falls. If it falls on [the arc above] the hypotenuse, then they say it will be a nine-month [pregnancy], but if it is below it, it will be a seven-month one, and if it falls on [the arc below] the horizontal side, it will be a living thing that is irrational or a monster.  
25 They also consider the degrees of the two new moons, both the one prior to conception and the one prior to the birth that will take place. Should they find that the one falls on the [arc above] the hypotenuse, while the other falls on [the arc below] the horizontal side, they say that the pregnancy will be nine months. But should they find that one is on [the arc beside] the vertical side and the other is on [the arc below] the horizontal one, then seven months. But if they should find that one  
5 falls on the hypotenuse, the other on the horizontal, then the birth will be something irrational or strange. These things harmonise with the numbers of the triangle, for the hypotenuse and the horizontal side are 5 and 4, while the horizontal side and the vertical one are 4 and 3, and the vertical side and the hypotenuse are 3 and 5. It is for this reason  
10 that the former pregnancies are natural (since they result from odd and even numbers), while the third kind is unnatural (since it results from two odd numbers).

After they have investigated the heavens and the auspicious times for conception that result from the heavens, the guardians look to the

<sup>329</sup> κατὰ τὴν ὥραν ταύτην, literally 'at this point in time' but the context makes clear what is at issue.

<sup>330</sup> καὶ ἐναρμόζουσι τοῦτο τὸ ὀρθογώνιον τρίγωνον. Kroll notes: τοῦτο vocat id quod aut saepius adhibitum aut figura adpicta illustratum sit.

<sup>331</sup> Cf. Frommhold (2004), 210–17 for a discussion of this very passage, with text, translation, and diagram, as well as a comparison with a similar passage in Hephaestio DGG.

sub-lunary order, both generally and specifically. In general terms,<sup>332</sup> they look to the rotation of the seasons since some of them are more suitable for the act of generation with respect to the temperaments (*kra-*  
*sis*) of those who enter wedlock.<sup>333</sup> After all, among plants and animals  
 too, some require a summertime condition for engendering the nature  
 that belongs to them, while others require the opposite. The rational-forming principles of nature (*logoi tês physeôs*) for the most part go  
 forth in the spring, but the seeds are scattered upon the earth when the  
 season is autumn. It is for this reason that, when it comes to the seasons,  
 they say that winter belongs to Kronos, since they hide the seeds under  
 the earth just as Kronos hid his own offspring, if you want to put it in a  
 theological manner (*theologikôs*). Or if you wish to put it in natural terms  
 (*physikôs*), it is due to the cold with which winter endows the things that  
 come to be. But in opposition to this, the summer belongs to Ares due  
 to the heat which it supplied to natural things and due to the difference  
 that distinguishes everything, which is what the ‘heat of battle’ represents  
 (*eneikonizein*). They say that the springtime belongs to Zeus in as  
 much as it is generative and reveals the rational-forming principles that  
 had been hidden – something which Zeus too does to his father, leading  
 forth into the realm of the manifest his offspring which he had hidden.<sup>334</sup>  
 The autumn belongs to Aphrodite, for in this season there is the sowing  
 of seed into the earth. But it is the function of Aphrodite to mix the  
 things that are generative (*gonimos*) and to lead the cause of generation  
 into intercourse (*koinônia*). (And it is therefore due to these facts that the  
 myth has Korê being ravished in this season, since she [Aphrodite] is the  
 one who presides over the propagation of all partial beings. The myth  
 adds that, having contrived the scorpion in her work at the loom<sup>335</sup> and

<sup>332</sup> εἰς τὴν ὑπὸ σελήνην τάξιν ὁράτωσαν τὴν τε ὄλην καὶ τὴν μερικὴν· τὴν μὲν ὄλην κτλ. Earlier we had a long gap between the *men* of the fixed stars that the guardians must look to (56.16) and the *de* of the planets (57.12). In this case, we must wait until 63.7 for τὴν δὲ δὴ μερικὴν. Proclus seems to presuppose an audience with outstanding powers of concentration and good recollection – rather like Plato’s guardians.

<sup>333</sup> The manuscripts have κατὰ τὰς τῶν καθεργυνμένων κράσεις (‘with reference to the temperaments of those who are locked in’). Kroll notes the strangeness of this, but Festugière proposes to amend to συνειργυνμένων in light of *Rep.* 461b5 and 460a9. This seems plausible and the existing text could have arisen from unwitting alteration. It would be easy enough for a copyist to slip from κατὰ ... συν... κράσεις τὸ κατὰ ... καθ... κράσεις.

<sup>334</sup> Cf. in *Crat.* 57.16–19 where the Demiurge plays the role of Zeus here in relation to Kronos: τὸ κρύφιον αὐτοῦ προάγων εἰς τὸ ἐμφανές.

<sup>335</sup> In the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter*, Korê/Persephone is taken by Hades while picking flowers. But in an Orphic alternative, she is weaving. Cf. *Orph. fr.* (Kern) 194 = Porphyry, *De antro nymph.* 66.13–19, ff. and Proclus, in *Tim.* III 223.3–11. For analysis, see Meisner (2018), 261–3.

15 having allotted it a position in the middle of this season, she submits to this seizure, for the scorpion is intimately related to reproduction (*zôogonia*) due to being intermediate and due to fecundity.<sup>336</sup> Some also say that *scorpion* derives its name from the fact that this is when the seeds are scattered.)<sup>337</sup> Finally, Hermes is common to all of the seasons, since he regulates the one principle (*logos*) that underlies them all and [regulates] their one arrangement in accordance with that principle.

20 Moreover, among the winds, some are possessed of more reproductive power, while others make the offspring dried out.<sup>338</sup> Some are productive of male offspring when they blow during the appropriate time of conception (as the north wind is), while others are productive of females (as the south wind is), for these are observations that occurred to those before us, in relation to which it is requisite [for the guardians] to look to these [winds as well]. Since that time it has been believed that  
25 good or bad mixtures of winds supply seeds that are fertile or infertile and that pregnancies are either brought to successful completion or end in miscarriages depending upon the winds, and that [the offspring]  
63 receive lives that are wiser or more foolish. The explanation for why the mixtures [of winds] contribute toward a life of some sort or other is not because the winds enter into the various sorts of bodies for the souls, but rather because the vehicles are enveloped in accordance with the innate worth [of the soul in question], some with impediments to the acquisition of virtue, while others lack such obstacles, since they  
5 provide for themselves a temperament for the possession of virtue.<sup>339</sup>

Now, with respect to the specific [factors], the guardians must look to the individual age groups<sup>340</sup> of those who are conjoined together, and whether their temperaments are hotter or cooler, and their ways of life are more impulsive or more reserved. For they would not wish that

<sup>336</sup> For the association of the scorpion with reproductive organs, see Sextus, *adv. Math.* 5,21; Manilius, *Astron.* II 452 ('Scorpios inguine regnat'); and Fimicus Maternus, *Mathes.* II 24.

<sup>337</sup> The play on σκορπίος and τῶν σπερμάτων σκορπιζομένων defies any very satisfactory English translation. Cf. Philo, *Leg.* I,2,3 86.

<sup>338</sup> Cf. Aristotle, *GA* IV 766b35–67a15. Proclus' parenthetical remark on 'observations' (*istorêmena*) may be prompted by Aristotle's recourse to the reports of shepherds about a correlation between the production of male lambs when the animals copulate facing north.

<sup>339</sup> This brief remark presumes some familiarity with Proclus' (and Porphyry's) theory of the animation of the human body. The winds do enter in to the composition of the various psychic vehicles that the rational soul puts on in its descent into becoming. The winds *correspond to*, but do not *cause*, vehicles of the sort that serve as a fit receptacle for the nature of the soul in question. Rather, the character of the psychic vehicles reflects the intrinsic worth of the souls that inhabit them. Cf. Wilberding (2017), 140–1.

<sup>340</sup> Cf. *Rep.* 460d–61c.

the marriage should be composed from people who are uni-form – for instance, from two people who were hotter in temperament or bolder or where both partners were cooler or calmer. Instead they would want to conjoin in a harmonious way partners who provide what is intermediate, and who blend successfully when it comes to what is bodily and in psychic ways of life. After all, they say that the balanced (*to metrion*) is everywhere more reliable than what is lacking in balance. Now, when it comes to the things in the heavens, it is customary to call those that are causes of good temperament and balance (*metriotês*) ‘beneficent’ (*agathourgos*), particularly in as much as they are causes of fertility, but to call the others that rule over the opposites ‘incompatible’ (*asymmetros*) with procreation (*genesis*). 10 15

When the guardians thus keep watch on all the things in the cosmos, they will discover the best times for marriages and the sacrifices that accompany them; setting [them] before the gods and summoning Providence by their sacred actions, they will know for the most part the result produced by the motions of Fate and they will declare them to be more effective by virtue of the attention of Providence and in this way they will show that this number is effective, holding it to be efficacious not in mere words but in actions, observing the numbers of the better harmony of the motions of the cosmos in preference to those of the worse [harmony of motions], of which [latter motions] Fate encompasses all the causes. [Fate] reveals the powers of some motions in some circuits and others in others by means of what are moved by it [i.e. Fate], viz. both fixed stars and planets and seasons and elements. The observer of these [motions] sees the powers of these numbers as if they were drawn in images,<sup>341</sup> and their motions can produce results through their concordance (*sympêônia*) with the universe.<sup>342</sup> 20 25 64

§38 <Nestorius’ method for discovering the divinities governing conception: 64.5–66.21>

I will set out the secret account (*logos*) concerning the right triangle, which the truly divine Nestorius – who was the grandfather of Plutarch, 5

<sup>341</sup> ἐν γράμμασι γραφομένοις (II.64.2): ‘in drawn images’. Schöhl wanted to read the accusative γραφομένης in place of the dative γραφομένοις, but that change is unnecessary since the dative comes to the same thing. ‘In drawn images’ is equivalent to ‘drawn in images’.

<sup>342</sup> The point of this long, tortuous sentence (II.63.19–64.4, which we have divided into three sentences) is that one can observe that the nuptial number does affect the universe and everything in it (even our births) when one looks at the various cycles that the number affects. We should give precedence to the more universal natures (planets and stars) over the more partial natures (seasons and elements), but nonetheless we can see the effects of the number on these lower natures as well.



who [i.e. Plutarch] was our master and that of our teachers<sup>343</sup>— brought to light, after he had been taught by those who were superior [instructors] themselves,<sup>344</sup> [an account] that shows the powers of the divine and mystic names. One must make use of these [names] in every annual cycle (*periodos*), but particularly in periods (*periphora*) of pregnancies (whether of the seven-month or nine-month kind, reckoning from the time of conception until the time of birth), summoning through them [sc. the names] those who are productive of good births. It is necessary, then, to inscribe this triangle, as we said,<sup>345</sup> with the right angle corresponding to the horoscopic degree positioned at the cardinal point,<sup>346</sup> while the horizontal line is among the [signs] that follow [the one that is ascendant], and the vertical line is among those [that arose] before it,<sup>347</sup> and the hypotenuse in the middle of both. [Having done this], it is necessary to see what letters have been assigned to the signs of the zodiac that lie below both the horizontal and the hypotenuse and to those signs that subtend the vertical and the horizontal line. It is necessary to make the name of the one who is the custodian<sup>348</sup> of the seven-month pregnancy or the custodian of the nine-month one – in the case where a nine-month pregnancy from the time of conception has been signified – [constructing the name] from those corresponding both to the horizontal and the hypotenuse, but in the case of a

<sup>343</sup> τῶν ἡμετέρων διδασκάλων: The use of the plural is odd. The reference clearly includes Proclus' teacher Syrianus, but were others intended as well? Proclus' phrase ἡμῶν 'our' here is either a slightly grandiloquent first-person plural for singular, or he is distinguishing his own generation of students from that of Syrianus, and reminding us that the long-lived Plutarch taught both groups. If the latter, then the use of the plural διδασκάλων may indicate that Plutarch had a good many students both in the generation of Syrianus and in that of Proclus.

<sup>344</sup> παρ' αὐτῶν διδασκάλων: the words refer to those superior in knowledge compared to even Nestorius and would include those with knowledge of the 'divine' interpreters of ancient wisdom, such as Plato, Pythagoras, and various Chaldeans and Egyptians.

<sup>345</sup> Supra 60.16. We seem to be working with the same diagram.

<sup>346</sup> κατὰ τῆς ὥροσκοπούσης μοίρας ἐγκεντρισθείσης. As Festugière notes, there is no other example of a similarly geometrical sense, but something like this must surely be the meaning given the nature of the diagram that is proposed.

<sup>347</sup> The vertical line falls in the signs that have already risen and the horizontal one on those that follow the sign of the ascendant. See Frommhold's diagram in 2004, 215.

<sup>348</sup> Astrological practice involves a number of lords or custodians with more general or more specific responsibilities; cf. Ptolemy, *Tetr.* IV.10. It seems possible, but by no means certain, that Nestorius' method is directed toward discovering the name of the daemon who will be the principal custodian of the soul that is incarnated (*Rep.* 618e; 620e). This would be a way of combining astrological concepts with the Neoplatonists' reading of the myth of Er. For an examination of the manner in which Porphyry wove these frameworks together, see Greenbaum (2018).



seven-month one, constructing the name from others corresponding to the vertical and the horizontal, assuming letters for the signs of the zodiac corresponding in one case to the hypotenuse and the horizontal, and in the other case corresponding to the right angle and the horizontal as they have been distributed in the sacred (*bieratikos*) art.<sup>349</sup> What results from these [letters] and from those appropriate to the planets will be, as was said, the [name] of the custodian for pregnancies for nine or seven months, for it is also necessary to consider the positions of the stars and how they have been configured at the time of conception (it is best for those in trine) and especially the positions of the benefics. It is also necessary to include in addition the letters of these [planets] to interweave them with those of signs of the zodiac in a harmonious way, stringing together the benefics and accepting them to a greater extent, whilst doing so much less with their opposites. After all, the [letters] that belong to the signs of the zodiac are analogous to bodies, while those that belong to the stars are analogous to souls; for the latter are vowels, while the letters that belong to the zodiac signs are consonants. But it is impossible for a body to live without soul, but it is possible for a soul to live without body, so that is parallel to the case where consonants are not naturally able to be pronounced apart from vowels, but vowels are able to be pronounced independently of consonants. We have said elsewhere what letters belong to what signs and what letters to what planets and how the seven vowels have been divided among the seven planets, and the seventeen consonants among the twelve signs. In any event, in combining them one should start from the vowels and place them amid the consonants and one ought to end with them. In the case of the consonants when, on the one hand, one is dealing with nine-month pregnancies, first place those that belong to the horizontal and then those that belong to the hypotenuse. But when one is dealing with a seven-month pregnancy, first place those that belong to the vertical, and then those that belong to the horizontal. (After all, the horizontal goes before the hypotenuse in its revolution and the vertical [goes before] the horizontal since the horizontal revolves above the earth after it and the hypotenuse comes after both of them.) In the case of the benefics, one must pronounce them with rough breathing, while with their opposites, one ought to use soft breathing.

This is the sort of training (*agôgê*) that that divine man handed down for finding the name of the annual chronocrator and which I have transposed to the case of the time of conception as something useful for

<sup>349</sup> The correlations between letters and signs or planets that Proclus learnt is not known. The basic idea, however, is found in other authors, though we find different, competing systems for aligning signs with letters. Cf. Boll (1903), 469.

those who will be looking after births.<sup>350</sup> [I have done this] so that they  
 5 might not merely keep an eye on the universe for the appropriate time  
 for consummating marriages and thus render the geometric number  
 actual, but in order that they might also supply the opportune moments  
 that they choose with effectiveness according to a sacred method.<sup>351</sup> And  
 this is consistent with the things stipulated by Plato, since he said that  
 10 the consummations of marriages are to be made along with sacrifices  
 and prayers.<sup>352</sup> If, therefore, you accept this [technique] for discovering  
 the name [of the chronocrator] along with the former [teachings on the  
 geometric number], then you will truly have the sacred method (*hierat-*  
 15 *tikos tropos*) of arranging marriages according to Plato, augmented with  
 sacrifices, with divine names, and with prayers. (This too would be the  
 goal, in the strictest sense, of the contemplation of this triangle – not  
 merely to have considered the matter mathematically and dialectically,  
 but also to have considered it in a sacred manner (*hieratikôs*), since the  
 activity itself is one that especially requires the gods' providence.) You  
 see as well that the names by which the births are ruled are those of  
 20 mundane cosmic (*perikosmios*) powers – that is, of the circle of the zodiac  
 and of the things that are moved by it.

§39 <Interpretation of the two harmonies at 546c2: 66.22–70.20>

It was stated earlier<sup>353</sup> what the contemplation of this number contrib-  
 utes toward the human cycle and that it conveys images of two ways of  
 life – both more intellectual or more irrational, and restorative (*apokat-*  
 25 *astatikos*) or centred on the works of generation (*genesourgos*). But the  
 fact that we have assumed the correct distribution of the two harmonies  
 is something we could have learnt from understanding what Socrates  
 meant in the *Phaedrus* (248e) when, in discussing the restorative num-  
 ber, he said that it was ten thousand. It is therefore clear that since there  
 30 are two harmonies and since it was clearly said that the better of the two  
 67 aims at the restoration of souls, the remaining harmony would have to

<sup>350</sup> This remark suggests that Nestorius' technique was originally directed at much the same ends as Ptolemy discusses in *Tetr.* IV.10. Note the change in terminology. While Proclus seeks to find the *ὀνόματα τοῦ τε κυριεύοντος τῆς τῶν ἐννεαμήνων σποράς καὶ τοῦ κυριεύοντος τῆς τῶν ἑπταμήνων*, Nestorius sought *ἐνιαυτοκράτορος ὀνόματος*; cf. Ptolemy *Tetr.* IV.10.20.1–3 *τοὺς μὲν οὖν καθολικοὺς χρονοκράτορας ληψόμεθα τὸν εἰρημένον τρόπον, τοὺς δ' ἐνιαυσίους ἐκβάλλοντες κτλ.*

<sup>351</sup> Festugière is surely correct in inserting *κατά*: *ἀλλὰ καὶ <κατά> τὸν ἱερατικὸν τρόπον παρέχωσι τοῖς καιροῖς, οὓς ἐκλέγονται, τὸ δραστήριον.*

<sup>352</sup> At 459e, Socrates mentions that sacrifices and hymns will accompany the weddings, while 461a mentions sacrifices, again, and adds prayers offered by priests and priestesses.

<sup>353</sup> See §36, above, especially 52.11–53.2. Cf. §17, 21.2–19. Proclus refers to the same *Phaedrus* passage (248e5–6) as here (66.27) in both passages: 52.18 and 21.19.

have an affinity with becoming and could not be said to be anything other than that which the hundred produces together with the number seventy five, since it exhibits sufficiently the way of life that is composed from things that are dissimilar. For after all, it is not possible for the life that is deprived of reason to be absent from reason and self-motion. Instead, it is necessary that what is inferior is mixed with what is superior.

Taking a different approach, let us then say once again<sup>354</sup> that the monad is fitting for the gods in as much as it includes the causes of all things in a unified manner, while the decad – since it is a secondary monad – is fitting for daemones. The number one hundred in turn, is a third-order monad that is fitting for human souls, for when the decad is squared, it proceeds into one hundred – which is of course parallel to the way that the race of daemons, when it coils itself into itself in a self-activating manner and remains in itself, engenders human souls in conjunction with the cause of all things that produces everything in a monadic manner. Therefore since the order of human souls has a procession that is the third from the gods and has a multitude of diverse forming-principles (*logoi*), then when, on the one hand, a soul reverts upon itself, it lives in an intellectual manner, since its rational principle (*logos*) is a self-moving one and it establishes a way of life that derives from itself and it rejoices in Sameness and Likeness – just as one hundred produces the myriad (10,000) when it engenders the divine number as a whole in itself through activities directed upon itself. But when, on the other hand, a soul is active in conjunction with the inferior kind of life, then it engenders the number that is oblong and centred on the works of generation, establishing a form of life that is simultaneously rational and irrational in as much as it sinks down into becoming. After all, just as one hundred is an image of our rational soul through the cause we stated, so too seventy-five is an image of the irrational soul. And Plato showed the image with great clarity when he divided it into twenty-seven and forty-eight, yet left the hundred undivided, indicating that one of these numbers is related to the One and to intellectual Sameness, while the other is related to the dyad and corporeal divisibility. Each of these two numbers is a harmony, with one being a square [number] and the other an oblong one. But the harmony must be conceived in a different manner in each case. One is a harmony that is fit for a god and redeems souls and establishes them in the gods, while the other is centred on the works of generation and connects the soul to enmattered things. While the former is genuinely the task of the educative Muses who perfect our intellectual powers and assimilate them to the celestial order, the latter is the task of certain Sirens and

<sup>354</sup> See above 21.24, ff.

resembles the harmonies that increase becoming [into additional dimensions].<sup>355</sup> In any case, the Sirens preside over this harmony – a harmony which someone who is led upward and is redeeming himself will ‘sail past’, pursuing the harmony that is better and truly musical;<sup>356</sup> but the ordinary person will delight in being bound by the Sirens and will remain in the realm of nature and nature’s sweet pleasures, bewitched by them. So there you have it: the quality of the forms of the harmonies and to which aspects of becoming in the universe they are connected – one to the Muses, the other to the Sirens.

If it is necessary to consider the distinctive features of the original numbers, one must look at how the hundred has been composed from two numbers in which similarity has predominated. One of them, the sixty four, comes from a square, on the one hand (since it is the cube of four) and, on the other hand, comes from a cube (since it is the square of eight), in order that it should proceed through similarity as far as three-dimensionality in order to revert from that point towards the beginning of its procession and to become a cube from being a square and to become a square from being a cube.<sup>357</sup> The other [number that the hundred comes from] is thirty six so that it should also come from things that are dissimilar since it is a three x three x four that has been forged from the base *epitritos* (or 4:3) being oriented toward becoming. But if it has come to be through inequality, it nonetheless has a form that remains in equality<sup>358</sup> since it has been enformed from the psychic

<sup>355</sup> αὐξούσαις ἀρμονίαις should be understood in terms of Proclus’ earlier treatment of Plato’s text at 546b6–7 (τέτταρας δὲ ὄρους λαβοῦσαι ὁμοιούντων τε καὶ ἀνομοιούντων καὶ αὐξόντων καὶ φθινόντων) at 52.1–5 above.

<sup>356</sup> There is a two-fold allusion to other Platonic texts, the latter of which defies easy translation. The cicadas at *Phaedrus* 259a are likened to alluring Sirens that one must ‘sail past’; cf. Proclus, in *Crat.* 88.15–26. The second allusion is to *Phaedo* 61a and was discussed by Proclus in Essay 5 of the *Republic Commentary*. The highest form of *mousikê* is *philosophy*. Now we noted in volume I that *mousikê* is a far wider category than the modern notion of music (and thus the adjective is appropriately translated as ‘cultured’ in many cases). But in order to capture the connection to *harmonia* we opt for ‘musical’ here, even though it is not obvious how philosophy is music to anyone who doesn’t know that the sense of *mousikê* is broader. Festugière adopts a different strategy and translates the phrase ‘truly worthy of the Muses’ (‘vraiment digne des Muses’).

<sup>357</sup> The ‘similarity’ consists in the fact that 64 is, on the one hand,  $4 \times 4 \times 4$  and, on the other,  $8 \times 8$ . It comes to be both from a cube and from a square since  $8 = 2^3$  and  $4 = 2^2$ .

<sup>358</sup> Reading μένον ἐν τῇ for γενομένη in line 27 ἔχει δὲ εἶδος ἡγενομένη τῇ ἰσότητι. Proclus’ point becomes clear when we consider how he constructed the number 36 when he sought the two terms of the continuous geometric proportion to ‘bind’ the extremes of the *epitritos* cubed (i.e. 27 and 64). Here, as elsewhere, he took two sides or factors from one extreme and one from the other. Hence  $3 \times 3 \times 4$ . But as it happens, 36 is also  $6^2$  and thus – like 64 – partakes in equality (sc. of its factors with one another).

hexad that makes a psychic circle. It seems too that when the sixty four proceeds from the four into three dimensions and terminates in itself, it makes the soul a paradigm for the cosmic sphere. The soul uses the tetrad – which the Pythagorean account<sup>359</sup> called a ‘font of inexhaustible nature’ – as a first principle, but multiplies the tetrad four times because the elements of the cosmos are in the universe in four modes (celestially, aetherially, and in the modes of air and earth). But the soul deepened the procession into a third dimension since it was next necessary for the universe to be constituted with the form of a solid rather than simply as a plane. Then it was made to revert back upon itself in order that it should be a cube and a sphere and so that it should include, on the one hand, the earth and, on the other, the heavens [which are each among] the extreme terms of the universe. The number thirty six also makes the soul an image of intellect, for in as much as intellect is male, it rotates itself through the number five<sup>360</sup> – remaining, proceeding, and reverting, and at no point departing from the five. In the same manner, the soul, which is female, remains, proceeds, and reverts from itself, through itself, and toward itself in accordance with the number six.

Again, the number seventy five has not been enabled entirely to escape the Same and the Similar due to its coming about from three cubed.<sup>361</sup> (After all, how would it be possible for the soul to be cast completely into the sea of dissimilarity<sup>362</sup> when it possesses an intellectual essence?) But, on the other hand, since the distinctive feature of circularity is not evident in this number [sc. 75], the lack of reversion

The number 6 (or the hexad) also has a rich collection of associations in Pythagorean numerology; cf. *Theol.Arith.* 42, 18–54, 9. In particular, 6 is the number of the soul.

<sup>359</sup> What follows is best understood in terms of the *Timaeus*, where a) the soul which is bound together by proportions is prior to the body of the universe and b) fire and earth are characterised as ‘extreme terms’ or *akra* that are similarly bound together through the intermediate elements in the manner of continuous geometric proportion. This can be called a Pythagorean *logos* since Proclus regards the ps.-Timaeus of Locris, *On the Nature of the World* as authentic.

<sup>360</sup> Five is the first ‘circular number’. That is to say, the final digit of each power of 5 is 5: 25, 125, 625, etc. Six is also a circular number: 36, 216, 1,296, etc.

<sup>361</sup> Previously Proclus derived the 75 that is multiplied by 100 to yield the human harmony, 7,500, by taking two of the members in the four-term geometric progression between  $3^3$  and  $4^3$  – viz. 27, 36, 48, 64. The 100 results from summing the 36 and 64 that have just been discussed. Now it is 75’s turn and Proclus will find the numerological meanings of 27 and 48.

<sup>362</sup> Festugière corrects Kroll’s reference to *Statesman* 273d. The context (unsurprisingly) is the myth passage which seems to have been a major preoccupation of the Neoplatonic commentaries on the dialogue. Rather surprisingly Proclus seems to reverse the valence of the ‘sea of dissimilarity’. In the *Statesman* myth, the god returns to take the helm of the universe lest it ‘founder in the tempest of confusion and sink in the boundless sea of dissimilarity’.

20 is sufficiently shown in the procession in [this number]. But [the other  
number 48], due to the fact that it is deprived of an origin from dissimilar  
numbers and of the rational and irrational sides with the diagonal of  
5, is a falling away from intellect and manifests the limit of intellect –  
25 wherefore 5, since it is a rational side, represents the fact that it comes  
from itself (for that which is rational is both held fast by number and ex-  
hibited by intellectual modes of apprehension (*epibolē*)). It also exhibits  
a procession into the irrational form of life when it projects itself into  
three dimensions in a manner that lacks reversion and extends itself.

70 To put it briefly, the hundred is an image of the soul's own self-moving  
life, since it proceeds from the decad in a manner that involves being  
squared, and leads out the myriad (10,000) in the same way, being both  
engendered and engendering [its products] through similarity, while  
5 preserving the limit of its innate cause in its own processions, since it  
squares itself while being a square of the decad. The number seventy  
five exists in relation to the irrational life that lacks reversion, but since it  
nonetheless has an association with the superior [life], it exhibits a pro-  
cession that occurs through similarity due to the cubing of numbers [i.e.  
10 through 27], but it exhibits a procession that occurs through dissimilar-  
ity due to the remaining number [sc. 48] – a procession through which  
it especially shows its irrational aspect which lacks any portion of the  
self-motion of intellect. It is for this reason that, among the harmonies,  
one is the harmony of the soul that has reverted upon itself and is secure-  
ly established within itself. The other is the harmony of the soul that has  
combined the dissimilarity (which is in accordance with the irrational)  
together with the similarity (which is in accordance with the rational  
15 (*logos*)), as well as combining the movement into what is moved by another  
together with its self-motion. Nevertheless, there is a ratio (*logos*) of  
these two [harmonies] to one another like that of the base *epitritos* (4:3).  
After all, it is necessary that the ratio that exists among ways of life (*zôê*)  
and among lives (*bios*) have a procession from what is implied in its  
20 essence, for the activities and the powers are also offspring of essences.

§40 <How the geometric number and the harmonies determine  
better or worse births: 70.21–72.27>

The geometric number which proceeds from the base of 4:3 towards the  
two harmonies of the soul is, as Socrates says, ‘master of such a deter-  
mination of better and worse births’ (546c7–d1) – meaning by ‘the sort  
25 of determination’ the [determination] of human births that no longer  
preserve the uni-form (*moneidês*) and perfect [character] of the divine  
birth cycle. When the guardians pay little attention to these worse and  
better births of human offspring – and they *will* pay little attention to  
71 them when they utilise reasoning conjoined with perception, since

perception will be among the things that lack accuracy and reliability and will transmit errors to reasoning – they will engender children who are ‘neither of the right nature nor of good fortune’ (546d2).

They will possess what is worse as a consequence both of their own life (and therefore they are not ‘of the right nature’ (*euphyês*)) and of the cosmic period [in which they are born] (and therefore they are ‘not of good fortune’). The class of souls that are appropriate to the [realm of] nature is coordinated with the appropriate order of the universe, for a kind of soul is coordinated with the order that is fitting for the universe. Thus, just as god-like souls are allocated a lot in life that assists them in obtaining their divine way of life from whole natures [sc. the heavenly spheres], so too souls that are not of the right nature have been assigned<sup>363</sup> a cycle that is not fortunate. As a result, the change from the best political order takes place when whole natures work together with partial natures, a change that is necessary and requires [contributions from] both the whole and partial natures.

The lack of proportion in their education shows clearly that the souls are not gifted (*euphyês*), for each thing’s natural propensity (*epitêdeiotês*) moves it toward the good that is appropriate to it. Thus whenever such a soul desires one of the things that would perfect it but is without desire for another, it is clear that it is neither completely gifted nor completely ungifted, but as [Plato] himself has said, such a soul is not gifted because of the weakening of its natural propensity for what is completely good. The fact that they are ‘not fortunate’ in the lot they have drawn from the cosmos is shown by there not being others who have been educated perfectly in virtue and who are better than they are so that, obedient to them, they might become better, but because of the lack of better [teachers] they are established as they are into governing and, being established, they destroy the education. With the destruction of the system of education comes the destruction of concord<sup>364</sup> and with the destruction of this, the destruction of the political order comes about. From these facts it is thus clear that it is more fortunate for those who are not gifted to be ruled rather than to rule so that they might not become the cause of impeding progress for themselves and of becoming corrupted for others.

<sup>363</sup> ἐπιτεκλωθομένην. Note that in the Myth of Er, Clotho and Atropos symbolise the way in which souls come under the influence, first, of the sphere of the fixed stars, and, subsequently, under the influence of the planets (*in Remp.* II 341.10–344.18). Clotho’s name is internal to the verb here and, apart from this occurrence, all uses of it by Proclus fall in the section on the Myth.

<sup>364</sup> ἡ συμφωνία (71.24): a reference to the concord of the three classes of the *polis*. See Plato, *Rep.* 432a6–9, where Plato defines self-control as a kind of συμφωνία between the better and worse parts of the soul and city.



30 It is also clear from these facts that the souls' [quality of] being gifted  
indicates their natural propensity, and possessing only this propensity  
72 they go forth into the realm of generation and perfect this propensity  
through the sort of ascent that comes after [entering] the realm of gen-  
eration. This is why in the *Phaedrus* he said that the 'newly-initiated' soul  
will enter into the seed of someone 'about to become a philosopher or a  
lover of beauty', and [afterwards] into that of one skilled in kingship or in  
war.<sup>365</sup> The phrase 'about to become' indicated to Plato the disposition  
5 suited to becoming such as one is after being born, for this phrase 'about  
to become' portends what the soul possesses after it has been born.

The phrase 'not having good fortune' clearly shows that among those  
things allotted to us from the universe in our choices,<sup>366</sup> chance takes  
precedence over<sup>367</sup> our choices in the fulfilment. This is why we some-  
times by chance experience better and worse things, since among the  
10 things that have been allotted from the cosmic order there are some  
that are better and some that are worse. Since there is a concession from  
us to the universe of the choice of living our lives in a certain way and  
since there is a concession from the universe to us of the allotment of  
15 such a life falling out in these ways,<sup>368</sup> there are then two intermediar-  
ies<sup>369</sup> for the [two] concessions: the daemon is the one who fulfils<sup>370</sup> our

<sup>365</sup> Proclus alludes to the myth of the births of the soul in the *Phaedrus*. The term 'newly initiated' (νεοτελής) comes later in the myth (250e1) and refers to the first of the nine kinds of birth that souls undergo (described in 248c8–e3). This first class of souls contains those that have seen the most of the Forms in the heavens before they were born. These will enter 'into the seed of a man about to become a philosopher or lover of beauty or one associated with the Muses or with the erotic art' (248 d2–d4: εἰς γονὴν ἀνδρὸς γεννησομένου φιλοσόφου ἢ φιλοκάλου ἢ μουσικοῦ τινος καὶ ἐρωτικοῦ). In their second birth, souls enter into the seed of those who will be a lawful king or one skilled in war or ruling (248d4–5: τὴν δὲ δευτέραν εἰς βασιλείῳ ἐννόμου ἢ πολεμικοῦ καὶ ἀρχικοῦ).

<sup>366</sup> A reference to the choice of lives in the Myth of Er, a choice made freely by the soul among a fixed number of kinds of life. See further below.

<sup>367</sup> Or 'takes charge of' (προεστήσατο, 72.8).

<sup>368</sup> Proclus imagines a pact or agreement (ὁμολογία) being established between us (the human agents) and the universe at large. We agree to choose a specific kind of life among the lots thrown down, and the universe guarantees that the life will in fact play out as indicated in the lot. In the *Republic*, a spokesperson (προφήτης, d2–3) of the Fates scatters the lots for the souls to choose among (*Rep.* X.617d1–618b2). For Proclus, the universe takes the place of the three Fates in the myth.

<sup>369</sup> With two intermediaries, we have a four-term proportion as we do with continuous geometric proportion that binds together the four elements in the *Timaeus*. There we had fire : air : water : earth. Here we have the universe : chance : the individual's daemon : the individual.

<sup>370</sup> The noun ἀποπληρωτής (72.17, 'one who fulfils or completes') is taken from the Myth of Er. After the souls have made their choice of life, Lachesis assigns each a guardian daemon, who is called ἀποπληρωτής τῶν αἰρεθέντων ('one who fulfils their choices', *Rep.* X.620e1). Here both the noun form (ἀποπληρωτής, 72.17 and 21) and



concession to the universe and chance fulfils the universe's concession to us. This in some cases is 'not being fortunate', viz. not being well-fated, which is the sort of condition that chance fulfils, just as 'not being gifted' is not having a natural disposition for living well after they had been born, which condition the daemon fulfils by leading our natural propensity for such a form of life into an actuality that is either better or worse.<sup>371</sup> The soul that is more gifted is the one that is naturally suited to every education, but the soul that has a natural propensity for some [kinds of education] but not for others is not gifted because of the weakening of this natural propensity, and the soul that has a natural propensity for no [kind of education] is ungifted.

§41 <Why the account of the guardians' education makes no explicit reference to these matters: 72.28–74.25>

Why, if the observation of the appropriate time (*kairos*) for sacred marriages indeed has so great a power that it can save or fail to save the best political order, did Plato not require it, just as the guardians were required to be educated in *mousikê* and physical training, why not also in this knowledge, which will acquaint them with the universal order and the most opportune moments that the cycles of the universe offer to those who are able to see them? For, completely lacking any share of this knowledge, they will not be competent judges of the appropriate times for good or bad births, even if they are supremely wise in all other matters. After all, it is doubtless necessary for there to be methods that are neither brief nor easily learnt and instruments for use in both day and night for the hunting of these [opportune moments in the universal cycles], and a person who had no experience of these [methods and instruments] would not be proficient when it comes to selecting or rejecting such [auspicious moments].

Perhaps it must be explained as follows: the lawmaker<sup>372</sup> who perfected the whole political order proposed to make the rulers wise in matters that pertain to ruling and, as Socrates himself said (503b5),

the adjectival (ἀποπληρωτική, 72.18 and 19) carry the meaning 'bring into being' or 'actualise'.

<sup>371</sup> In this sentence Proclus lays out what he intended in the previous one, showing how the universe and chance affect us. If we are 'unfortunate', then we are badly fated, and that is a situation that chance controls. But if we are gifted or not has to do with being born with the natural virtue to handle what fate has set for us. If we are not gifted, then we cannot easily cope with the kind of life that the daemon leads us to.

<sup>372</sup> τῷ συνιστάντι τὴν ὅλην πολιτείαν πολιτείαν: This is what Proclus will later refer to as 'the lawmaker' (τοῦ νομοθέτου, 73.23). Thus it is not Plato or Socrates in particular, but anyone who follows their precepts for establishing the ideal state. This 'lawmaker' will be the subject of the following sentence as well.

15 [to make them] philosophers, and they were made such because they  
 had been led through the whole course of education and through the  
 very knowledge of divine matters. [The lawmaker] enjoined those who  
 would become such to complete what was missing and to receive the  
 kinds of knowledge (*epistêmê*) that contribute to their rule, for having  
 become wise already they will know (*gignôskein*) what other more spe-  
 20 cific (*merikôtēros*) forms of knowledge (*gnôsis*), whether based on study  
 or experience, are required for the providential care of the state.<sup>373</sup> After  
 all, since they are generally responsible for celebrating sacred mar-  
 riages, there are surely also sacrifices and sacred rites that will be required  
 for these. Nonetheless, it was not said they are to be educated in this  
 [branch of knowledge] since the lawmaker would have allowed that  
 they receive it additionally. And why will they not also require the art of  
 25 prophecy since they are exercising providence in affairs that are human  
 and uncertain? But indeed they are required to make an investigation  
 of this too. Thus if nothing else necessitated [that the guardians have]  
 the knowledge (*epistêmê*) of the appropriate times [for giving birth], the  
 times that brought about inappropriate results would be likely to instil  
 in [the guardians] the desire for the knowledge (*gnôsis*) of these [arts].

74 In regard to these matters, the lawmaker, knowing that he had made  
 the guardians wise, permitted them additionally to consider and involve  
 themselves with the pursuit of arts and experiences that contribute to  
 5 human activities. And so it is necessary that the rulers of the best city,  
 just as the gods do, have some traits from the Father<sup>374</sup> but contribute  
 others from themselves. After all, the gods too, receive some traits from  
 the causes above them, while others they co-establish by virtue of their  
 own ranks. They possess a two-fold perfection – both from themselves  
 and from those [above them]. If, therefore, the rulers should have need  
 10 of divination through inspection of sacrificial animals or through ob-  
 servation (*katanoêsis*) of the arrangements of the universe<sup>375</sup> for [deter-  
 mining the opportune moment] for mating or other practices for other  
 civic activities, they themselves will make the observations or pursue  
 the practices. They are not likely to be unprepared in these matters  
 either because of ignorance of the appropriate studies (both as a matter

<sup>373</sup> Proclus seems not to distinguish between ἐπιστήμη and γνῶσις here. The former is usually a technical term for full knowledge of something (as opposed to mere opinion) while the latter is often restricted to the knowledge of Forms or Intelligibles. Here, however, γνῶσις appears in the plural, for different kinds of γνῶσις, and is even called experiential, which would pertain more to the world of becoming than to that of Intellect. We therefore use the translation ‘knowledge’ for both Greek terms.

<sup>374</sup> That is, from the Demiurge. The guardians imitate the visible gods.

<sup>375</sup> Presumably the positions of the stars and planets are meant since these determine auspicious and inauspicious births.

of general likelihood and especially since their duties [as guardians] lead them to attend to which studies are necessary). Nor [will they neglect them] because of laziness (since they are wise and have been schooled in every branch of human education, because of which they were accustomed to neglect none of the best pursuits) nor because of an incapacity (since they have the highest natures, of the sort that Socrates defined for future guardians, who are the best with regard to keenness [of mind] and to memory as also to other things).<sup>376</sup> Thus from all these things the lawmaker supposed with sound reason, because he had merely indicated that they had need of the theory of the cosmic cycles, that he could entrust to them the discovery of this theory and practice.

<§§42–45 Concluding observations: 74.26–80.28>

§42 <The myth of the three races at 546e1–47a5: 74.26–78.11>

The theologian Orpheus<sup>377</sup> taught that there are three races of humans.<sup>378</sup> The very first is gold, which he says is the very one that Phanes established. The second is silver, over which he says that the mighty Kronos ruled. Third is the Titanic [race] which he said that Zeus assembled from the limbs of the Titans. Now Orpheus understood that every form of life for humans is encompassed in these three terms. For after all, a form of life is either intellectual and divine, since it is established among the very highest of existent things, or else it has reverted upon itself and intelligises (*noein*) itself and enjoys this sort of life, or else it looks toward what is inferior and wants to live with what is irrational. Now since the human ways of life are three-fold, the very first [form of life] is from Phanes, who connects every [form of life] that performs intellection to the intelligibles. The second [form of life] is from Kronos, who is (as the myth says) the first who is ‘of crooked counsel’ (*agkulomêtês*) and who causes all to revert upon themselves. The third [form of life] is from Zeus who teaches inferior beings to take care of and arrange secondary existences, for this is characteristic of demiurgic activity.

Hesiod, on the other hand,<sup>379</sup> does not make only three races, but makes the first gold, then silver, then bronze, followed by a certain race

<sup>376</sup> See Plato, *Rep.* 503c2–7, esp. c2: Εὐμαθεῖς καὶ μνήμονες καὶ ἀγχοῖνοι καὶ ὀξεῖς, ‘quick to learn, and shrewd and keen in memory’.

<sup>377</sup> in *Remp.* II 74.26–75.12 = Kern, *Orph.* fr. 140.

<sup>378</sup> This section of the commentary is prompted by Socrates’ remark about Hesiod at *Rep.* II.377d–378a. Though Proclus begins with Orpheus, he spends most of the section allegorising Hesiod’s *Works and Days* 110–69. For Proclus’ commentary on Hesiod, see Marzillo (2010).

<sup>379</sup> That is, by contrast with Orpheus, whom Proclus believes to be the earlier writer. The particle δέ in 75.12 answers the μέν of 74.26, some seventeen lines earlier.

15 of heroes, and then the race of iron, thus carrying the division forward into more multi-form (*polyeidês*) lives. In this way he demonstrates that the golden race is a certain intellectual life that is free from matter and pure (*akbrantos*),<sup>380</sup> of which gold is a symbol inasmuch as it is, as they say, incapable of receiving rust and decay. It is for this reason that such a race changes to the rank of daemons after their period in the realm of generation – a rank of beings that exercises providence over the human  
20 race, preserving it, and protecting it from evil.<sup>381</sup> And while [this race] is in the realm of generation, he says, it is nourished for one hundred years<sup>382</sup> and brought to maturity by its parents. He has written, as it seems to me, a myth that is appropriate to the Muses and has indicated that since [this race] <acts> in accordance with Intellect, <it clings to> its parents<sup>383</sup> and has removed itself from human concerns, thereby living a life that returns it to its beginning.<sup>384</sup> The hundred years indicate  
25 for Hesiod, as well as to some degree for Plato (as he himself said [546c] in this speech of the Muses), the period of the form of life that is characterised by sameness, similarity, and intellection.

<sup>380</sup> Presumably this is Proclus' reading of the fact that Hesiod's golden race lives 'with a spirit free from care, entirely apart from toil and distress' (*Works and Days* 112–13; LCL vol. 57).

<sup>381</sup> Cf. *Works and Days* 121–6: 'But since the earth covered up this race, by the plans of great Zeus they are fine spirits upon the earth, guardians of mortal human beings: they watch over judgments and cruel deeds, clad in invisibility, walking everywhere upon the earth, givers of wealth.' Proclus adopts the adjective *alexikakos* ('protecting from evil') directly from Hesiod (123).

<sup>382</sup> Proclus seems to have imported this detail from Hesiod's account of the *silver* race. It is this race, not the golden race, who are said to have this peculiar hundred-year life. 'Afterward those who have their mansions on Olympus made a second race, much worse, of silver, like the golden one neither in body nor in mind. A boy would be nurtured for a hundred years at the side of his cherished mother, playing in his own house, a great fool. But when they reached adolescence and arrived at the full measure of puberty, they would live for a short time only, suffering pains because of their acts of folly' (*Works and Days* 127–34, LCL vol. 57). It is possible that these lines (75.20–5) have been placed incorrectly in the MS and should be moved to 76.9. See Finamore (forthcoming).

<sup>383</sup> Kroll marks a lacuna of sixteen letters and conjectures: κατὰ νοῦν <ἐνεργοῦν ἐξήπται τῶν> πατέρων καὶ τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων ἐξήρηται πολυπραγμοσυνῶν ἀποκαταστατικῶς διαζῶν.

<sup>384</sup> For the meaning of this difficult sentence, see Proclus, *Inst.* 199, where he avers that 'every encosmic soul makes use of periodic cycles of its life and of returns to its beginnings' (Πᾶσα ψυχὴ ἐγκόσμιος περιόδοις χρῆται τῆς οἰκείας ζωῆς καὶ ἀποκαταστάσεσιν). The point is that these golden souls originate in the Intelligible with the Intellect, descend to live a life nourished in the cosmos, and return to their proper place above. So here too in the *Republic* commentary, the 'golden' soul remains connected to the Intelligible (its 'parents') and so can remove itself from the cosmic realm easily and return to its source (the transcendent Intellect).

After this, the silver race proceeds from intellectual activity to an activity that is mixed, being both intellectual and rational. Silver is a symbol (*synthêma*) of this [double activity]. On the one hand it possesses the brilliance of a life led in accordance with reason and exhibits a property of sometimes sharing in material rust and decay, but it also takes on another property in addition to these and when it is placed next to [gold] it reflects the gold and does not act differently from gold.<sup>385</sup> So too, the reason that belongs to the soul, even if it is filled with matter and material impurity, is nonetheless illuminated by intellect and, having been illuminated, produces for itself a single and common activity with it: ‘contemplating the [truly] existent things’<sup>386</sup> ‘by intellection together with reason’, as Plato says (*Tim.* 28a1).

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Next the third race of bronze establishes its own life only in the very activity that accords with reason, a life that bronze reveals symbolically for the poet, who says that those who were assigned to this race by Zeus prepare all their technical activities and all their military activities through bronze (for, he says, ‘there was no black iron’ [*Op.* 151]). Immaterial reason, therefore, existing as pure light purified of the darkness of matter, possessing by itself a certain likeness (*apeikasia*) to intellect because of its reversion upon itself – just as bronze has a certain likeness to gold – defines the life of these [members of the bronze race]. In addition, if most resonant bronze imitates the vivific rushing (*roizos zôtikos*) of the soul, it would be appropriate for the intermediate form of life that accords with reason (*kata logon*).

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The fourth is the race of demigods, which turns<sup>387</sup> reason toward a life that is entirely practical<sup>388</sup> and receives in addition from its passion

<sup>385</sup> This is a complex comparison of the life of the silver race with that of the gold. The key difference is that while the golden race engages in intellection only, the silver race engages in both intellection at one time (when it is in the Intelligible Realm) and in discursive reasoning. Thus the silver race is both like and not like the golden. It shares intellection but adds *logos* (discursive thinking), admitting a kind of decay and rust. When juxtaposed with shiny gold, silver takes on the sheen of (περιλάμπεσθαι, literally ‘is illumined roundabout by’) the gold and, reflecting gold’s yellow colour, acts (and so looks) like gold, just as the human soul when it ascends to the Intellect reflects Intellect and so is able to intelligise.

<sup>386</sup> Kroll indicates *Pbdr.* 247e2–3, which seems a plausible passage to which Proclus may be alluding: καὶ τᾶλλα ὡσαύτως τὰ ὄντα ὄντως θεασαμένη καὶ ἐστιαθεῖσα (‘having in the same way contemplated and feasted upon the other things that really are’).

<sup>387</sup> It is odd that Proclus here uses the verb ἐπιστρέφει, which would normally refer to the return or reversion of a lower entity to a higher (as the soul’s return to the level of Intellect), for a turn toward a lower realm.

<sup>388</sup> πρακτικὴν . . . ζῶην: By ‘practical life’, Proclus means one that is opposite from life at the Intelligible level. It is a life affected by the irrational parts of its nature. Proclus is referring to practical activities in the lower realm. The term πρακτικὴν is picked up later by πράξεσιν (76.24). See the following note.

25 a certain motion of its irrational [elements]<sup>389</sup> and an impulse in its actions since it is more eagerly attached to them.<sup>390</sup> On account of this, the poet did not allot to it [sc. the race of demigods] some specific material,<sup>391</sup> since inasmuch as it has something from the race before it and something <from that> after it, it is genuinely [a race] of demigods, because it has blended the mortal life of passion<sup>392</sup> together with reason  
77 that has been allotted a divine essence. Thus reason provides to it great achievement and success in its deeds, but passion, which is interwoven with its reason, adds to it that it acts or is acted upon with either [a feeling of] sympathy or antipathy.

5 The iron race, which is fifth, is genuinely last and chthonic since it is impassioned (*empathês*). It is similar to iron in being resistant, unyielding, earthy, black, and dark. Surely the nature of passion is like this too: difficult to correct, ‘hard to bend’ by reason, ‘weighed down from behind’, and having (so to say) no share in reason, which is ‘light’.<sup>393</sup> The iron to which the poet likens the fifth race is an image (*eikôn*) of all of these things. Therefore it is likely that this race is last and least in worth since it is bound fast in the passions, risking degeneration into a way of life that is utterly bestial and irrational, indistinctly procuring for itself  
10 the light of reason. Likewise, iron has only an indistinct resemblance to the colour of silver, since it is for the most part dark, for the emotional faculty (*to pathêtikon*) too has the power of imagination (*phantasia*) which aspires to imitate intellect and reason, but it has been weakened through the fact that its activities take place in conjunction with matter.  
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<sup>389</sup> The MS reading is κίνησιν τῶν ἀλόγων (76.24, ‘motion of the irrational [elements]’) and refers most probably to the properties of the irrational soul. Kroll questioned whether κίνησιν ἄλογον (‘irrational motion’) might not be a preferable reading, and Festugière accepted Kroll’s suggestion without comment. Although Kroll’s suggestion is simpler, it doesn’t help to make the sentence any clearer, and we can make sense of the MS reading without it. The next phrase, ὁρμὴν ἐν ταῖς πράξεσιν (76.24–5, ‘[irrational] impulse in its actions’), is parallel to the motion of the irrational in the soul. The actions are the activities of members of the heroic race, actions which are no longer Intelligible thoughts but rather practical activities in the lower realm. As such the impulse (like the motion) is irrational.

<sup>390</sup> προθυμότερον αὐτῶν ἐφαπτόμενον (76.25): ‘them’ refers to the actions and ‘it’ to the race of heroes. The heroes, who have acquired an irrational nature, are characterised as more eager for the activities that make use of that very nature.

<sup>391</sup> ὕλην ἀπένειμεν αὐτῷ τινα ἐξάιρετον: i.e. some specific metal like gold, silver, or bronze.

<sup>392</sup> Reading τὴν θνητοειδῆ <μετά> τοῦ πάθους ζωὴν with Kroll and Festugière.

<sup>393</sup> in *Remp.* II 77.7–10 = Chaldean Oracles fr. 155 (Majercik). It is a doubtful fragment, of which the phrase λόγῳ δύσκαμπτos καὶ ὀπισθοβαρὴς is the most likely to be genuine, but see Majercik’s note. The adjective ὀπισθοβαρὴς (‘weighed down from behind’) appears in Plotinus, *Enn.* VI.9.4, line 22, of a soul being pulled back from the One. Lewy and Tardieu (1978), 278 n. 77 doubt the word is Chaldaean since Plotinus does not usually quote from the Oracles. Cf. Hadot in Lewy and Tardieu (1978), 709–11.

Such, then, are Hesiod's races. Plato, however, since he divided the city-state into two, assigns the gold and silver to those [citizens] that have been ranked higher, but the bronze and iron to those ranked lower.<sup>394</sup> To the guardian class, he assigns gold since it is pure and immaterial, while to the auxiliary class he assigns silver since the auxiliary class is akin to the guardian and receives its education and reason from it. To the working class, which makes use of material passions,<sup>395</sup> he assigns iron and bronze. There is in a certain way an altogether better and worse analogue to those [two metals] in this [lowest class]. The bronze preserves an analogy of the better part in the lowest class to gold, while the iron [preserves an analogy of the worse part] to silver.<sup>396</sup> When, therefore, the Muses say that it is necessary not to mix the races given by Hesiod or by Plato, but to preserve them as distinct from one another (*Rep.* 546d8–547a5), they think it proper that the superior and inferior forms of life remain unmixed. Through these metals the two [authors] signify differences about the forms of life, which must be preserved whether someone were to distinguish them into five divisions as Hesiod does or into two divisions of two each as Plato does. For [the Muses add that]<sup>397</sup> the mixture does not preserve the gold pure but from the mixture of other [metals] it becomes rusted and decayed and that iron no longer preserves its own rank but wishes to perform the tasks of silver because of its mixture, even though it is earthy but not fiery and dark but not light.

<sup>394</sup> For the division into these four metals and their correspondence with the three classes in the ideal city, see *Rep.* III.415a2–7.

<sup>395</sup> πάθεισιν ὕλικοῖς, 77.25: The concerns of the lowest classes in the city are material in nature, and so their passions are for material entities rather than for philosophical pursuits.

<sup>396</sup> It is not clear how Proclus imagines the distinction within the lowest class. Possibly the better of the lower classes are skilled workers whose art or work involves planning and the worse are unskilled (the difference between, say, artisans and trireme rowers) or perhaps the difference involves property ownership or wealth, although these latter sorts of distinction seem less philosophically based and so less likely.

<sup>397</sup> For the words of the Muses, see *Rep.* 547a2–4: 'Nevertheless, when iron is mixed with silver and bronze with gold, a dissimilarity and unharmonious diversity will intervene, and when they occur, wherever they are generated, always bring war and enmity' (ομοῦ δὲ μιγέντος σιδηροῦ ἀργυρῷ καὶ χαλκοῦ χρυσῷ ἀνομοιότης ἐγγενήσεται καὶ ἀνωμαλία ἀνάρμοστος, ἃ γενόμενα, οὗ ἂν ἐγγένηται, αἰεὶ τίκεται πόλεμον καὶ ἔχθραν) and *Rep.* 547b2–7: 'After strife has arisen, the two elements pull in opposite directions, iron and bronze toward money-making and the possession of land, a house, gold, and silver, but the other two (gold and silver) since they are not impoverished but wealthy by nature lead their souls to virtue and ancient tradition' (Στάσεως, ἣν δ' ἐγώ, γενομένης εἰλικτήν ἄρα ἐκατέρω τῷ γένει, τὸ μὲν σιδηροῦν καὶ χαλκοῦν ἐπὶ χρηματισμὸν καὶ γῆς κτήσιν καὶ οἰκίας χρυσίου τε καὶ ἀργύρου, τὼ δ' αὖ, τὸ χρυσοῦν τε καὶ ἀργυροῦν, ἅτε οὐ πεινομένω ἀλλὰ φύσει ὄντε πλουσίω, τὰς ψυχὰς ἐπὶ τὴν ἀρετὴν καὶ τὴν ἀρχαίαν κατὰστασιν ἡγήτην).



§43 <Dissimilarity (547b2) as the cause of faction: 78.12–79.24>

The sacred speech of the Muses<sup>398</sup> plausibly says that dissimilarity is the cause of faction. For if similarity is that which leads the many to unity, and if the saying is true that ‘like is friend to like’, then it is surely clear that dissimilarity is the cause of faction and of enmity, and that what is dissimilar alienates everything to which it is dissimilar. How then, in these [circumstances] does dissimilarity give birth to faction among the rulers? How could it be anything other than the rulers no longer being solely good or having pure natures or being free from the way of life of the multitude, but instead mixing with the passions? Their dissimilarity to one another comes to pass due to the mixture of things that are dissimilar – reason and irrationality, education and lack of education, good breeding and ill breeding. When this is introduced, some are pulled toward some impulses and desires, others toward other desires which they want to fulfil, stimulating factional conflict with one another when, due to the dissimilarity of their characters, they no longer consider all things as held in common, and no longer flee from the distinction between ‘mine’ and ‘yours’, and no longer take pleasure or feel distress over the same things. After all, the dissimilarity of their characters separates pleasure and pain for them. Since some take delight in some things, while others delight in other things and some are vexed over some things, others over others, the private [good] is placed ahead of the common [good]. When the desires within them have been divided, faction falls upon them, because the private passions that have been lurking within each draw them toward various things.

Factionalism, therefore, destroys the political order (*politeia*). But dissimilarity among the rulers toward one another caused this [factionalism]. And it was the mixture of ruling and non-ruling classes in the city that caused this [dissimilarity]. And it was the lack of education (*amou-sia*) about celebrating marriages and matings that caused this [mixture], when the guardians were rendered incapable of judging natures that are similar and of placing them on the same level as one another. And it was the laziness of those educating them that caused this lack, when they nurtured their education in physical training, but neglected cultural education (*mousikê*). And it was the false vision that the wise rulers had of the appropriate time necessary for marriages that caused this [laziness], when [their false vision] engendered men who were not entirely up to the standard of being guardians. This was because those [wise rulers]

<sup>398</sup> *Rep.* VIII. 546d8–547a4, where Socrates is considering the decline of the ideal *polis* and connects it with the guardians’ ability to differentiate who belongs in which of the three categories of gold, silver, and bronze. When the three categories are intermingled, he says, war and enmity result (ἀεὶ τίκτει πόλεμον καὶ ἔχθραν, 547a4).



used reasoning together with perception, but perception does not possess the infallibility that lies in the intellectual contemplation (*theôria*) of the appropriate time (*kairos*).

It is obvious from all these facts that the opportune moment has the greatest power in relation to the destruction of the best political order. It is this [moment] which the cycle of the cosmos as a whole determines for the correct generation of things. Since all that comes to be, comes to be in time, but not everything comes to be at the opportune moment, but rather only that which would be destined to achieve the good and its appropriate perfection, it is in this respect that the opportune moment differs from every other time.

§44 <The poets and the Muses on dissimilarity and faction: 79.25–80.5>

This speech itself made clear the close kinship of the race of poets with the Muses, since it begins from the Homeric invocation ‘How faction first fell upon them’<sup>399</sup> and ends with the Homeric quotation ‘this is the lineage it is necessary to declare for faction wherever and whenever it comes to be’. This speech indicates, I suppose, that dissimilarity is the root of factionalism and demonstrates that in the invocation to the Muses the *nature* (*eidos*) of it is divisive and destructive, just as fire consumes everything that happens to be available, while in the later quotation [it indicates] the *cause* from which the kind of dissimilarity of character is established.

§45. <Conclusion – the One, sameness, and political unity: 80.6–28>

The goal of the best constitution is unification (*henôsis*), just as it is in the composition of the cosmos and, prior to the cosmos down here, [as] the One [is], for similarity is also ranked together with (*systoikhia*) the One. It is for this reason that all that proceeds is brought forth through similarity from causes that are kindred (*oikeios*) [to their effects]. All that reverts upon its first principle through similarity reverts by means of its longing (*pothos*) for the One, for that which is incapable of remaining in the One delights in what is similar in as much as this is akin to the One. Now, harmony and rhythm have their existence through similarity, and over them the Muses have authority – which is surely the reason why not every ratio (*logos*) creates rhythm or harmony, but rather [only] those that have a share in similarity, that is, the super-particular (*epimorios*) and the multiple (*polyplasios*).<sup>400</sup> The multiply divided and multiply composed character of other ratios is alien to the musical ratios.

<sup>399</sup> Proclus cited this Homeric quotation at the beginning of this Essay (4.6–7), note *ad loc.*

<sup>400</sup> The musical ratios are either multiples (like the octave at 2:1) or else super-particular (like the fifth at 3:2 or the fourth at 5:4 or the tone at 9:8). Cf. *in Tim.* II 167.31–

Therefore correspondingly the Muses, by means of their own activities and the gifts which they give to the cosmos, have accorded faction to dissimilarity in the way of life and, again, friendship to similarity.<sup>401</sup> Since the sacred number of the Muses itself is of the nature of the same and the similar, since it is the square of the first perfect odd number,<sup>402</sup> marked off in three triads,<sup>403</sup> not merely perfect<sup>404</sup> but perfect in every way, since is revertible<sup>405</sup> into the monad from which it has proceeded, and since it itself yearns to be the new One, let this be our goal in our examination of the speech of the Muses: leading our contemplation to the One.

The bee in the speech of the Muses in the *Republic*.

168.14 for Proclus' account of why the Pythagoreans confine genuine *symphônia* to just multiples and super-particulars, rejecting intervals like the eleventh (8:3).

<sup>401</sup> That is, since the harmonies which the Muses impart to the cosmos contain ratios that embody both the like and the unlike, they also contribute likeness and unlikeness to the cosmos, including forms of likeness such as friendship and unlikeness such as factional discord.

<sup>402</sup> That is,  $9 = 3^2$ .      <sup>403</sup> That is, three rows of three units each.      <sup>404</sup> Or 'complete'.

<sup>405</sup> *συνελίσσόμενος* (80.25): literally 'rolled up'. Proclus has used the verb to describe the process of reversion in this essay in section 36 (46.25) and elsewhere in the commentary. See our note to 46.25, above. Here it means that the number 9 reverts to the number 1. See 4.20–2, above, where the Muses 'proceed from the monad' and 'desire to be the new one'.

## Introduction to Essays 14 and 15

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These two brief essays bridge the gap between the extensive discussion of the nuptial number in Essay 13 and the massive commentary on the Myth of Er that will follow in volume III of this series. Essay 14 contains a kind of appendix in tabular form that summarises the three arguments that the life of the just person is happier. Essay 15 opens with a similar tabular presentation of the main sections of Book X of the *Republic*.

We can delve no further than the Vatican manuscript (Vat. gr. 2197) into the history of these diagrammatic representations of the contents of the two essays, but it is striking that both appear on the same page (111r). The scholia to the part of the codex that remained in Florence have one somewhat similar tabular presentation of information but this summarises divisions to be found among the kinds of powers in Plato's *Laws*. It does not provide a tabular summary of the content of Proclus' text.<sup>1</sup> Part of Essay 13 carries over onto 111r, so it seems integral to the version created by the ninth- or tenth-century copyist. Was it integral to the source that he copied? We cannot say. But it is odd that the summary of Essay 14 follows the text, while the summary of Essay 15 precedes the text it summarises.

But it is perplexing why any scribe or compiler would have chosen to present the content of these two essays in particular. They are, after all, among the shortest and simplest in Proclus' *Commentary on the Republic*. They stand rather like a bridge over a river at a point where it is easy to ford. Sure – it's the easiest place to build a bridge. But that fact also makes the bridge largely superfluous.

Diagrams and tables are not uncommon in Byzantine manuscripts, especially in Platonic and Aristotelian texts, that is, in manuscripts of works of the classical philosophers themselves or interpretations, paraphrases, and commentary related to them. Indeed, the same kinds of explanatory diagrams appear, for instance, in the texts of Aristotle's *Organon* and in the complex exegetical tradition on those texts. Such diagrams tend to be provided on texts or parts of texts which are particularly concerned with differentiating concepts. The tables on 111r in the Vatican manuscript bear a close similarity to diagrams like those, to

<sup>1</sup> Kroll, vol. 2, 376 ad *in Remp.* I 267.29.

take just one example, in the manuscripts of Michael Psellos' *opusculum* on 'the five *phônai*' (*Philosophica Minora* 1.51).<sup>2</sup> The application of diagrams to this exegetical text of Psellos follows naturally on the similar use of diagrams in the presentation of the classical texts themselves, which in this instance occupies the majority of the codex.

What we have then, in these two tables, is almost certainly not a diagrammatic aid which Proclus has supplied, but evidence of later engagement with Proclus' text, by readers who valued its contents sufficiently to produce this kind of visual aid. Though it remains a little puzzling why these two essays should attract diagrams while others do not, it can be observed that the schematic nature of their contents makes them particularly suited to this treatment. The question, perhaps, is why other essays in the commentary have not attracted similar diagrams. There are, of course, geometric diagrams in the manuscripts to explain the geometrical discussion in Essay 13, but nothing quite like those of 111r.

At a mere three pages, Essay 14 is by far the shortest of all the essays in the *Republic Commentary*. Only the treatment of Theodore of Asine on women's virtue in Essay 9 (7 pages) and the exegesis of the argument in *Republic V* on knowledge and belief in Essay 10 (10 pages) are shorter than Essay 15 (12 pages). Moreover, unlike Essays 9 and 10, Essay 15 attempts to summarise the structure and content of the whole of Book X of the *Republic*. So both Essays 14 and 15 seem superficial – the former because of its absolute brevity, the latter because of its brevity relative to its subject matter. Nonetheless, the two essays do hold some interest.

Essay 14 addresses the three arguments in *Republic* 577c–87b that the life of the just person is happier than that of the unjust person. The first of these reaches this conclusion on the basis of an analogy with the relative happiness of the cities corresponding to the psychic types of the philosopher-king, the timocrat, the oligarch, the democrat, and the tyrant (580b3–4). Proclus' comments seem to be intended to create intertextual resonances for those who know their Plato. His characterisation of the monarchic political order as 'a way of life that is imbued with intelligence' hearkens back to Socrates' summary of the 'riches' with which the guardians are endowed (521a4). But this notion of being endowed with intelligent life also characterises the entire cosmos at *Timaeus* 36e4. The ideal civic constitution or political order is, of course, a microcosm of the *politeia* of the cosmos. This connection with the cosmic paradigm is further reinforced by intertextual connection with Book X. Proclus' off-hand remark about intelligence

<sup>2</sup> This text is preserved in Bodleianus Baroccianus gr. 87 and Genuensis Bibl. Uni v. F. VI.9.

‘saving’ those who possess it (II 81.24) looks forward to the myth of Er at 621a7 and we know that he takes the myth to be a suitable conclusion to Plato’s political treatise since it exhibits the governance of the celestial *polis* that serves as the paradigm for the just state on earth (II 98.7–9).

Proclus’ discussion of the argument is attracted to the way in which Plato draws the conclusion that the life of the just person is the most pleasant. At 582a5, Socrates says that the judge who has experience (*empeiria*), as well as intelligence (*phronêsis*) and reason (*logos*) is best placed to judge which life is most pleasant. Rather than rehearsing carefully the steps in Plato’s argument, Proclus spends a paragraph discussing the relation between experience, intelligence, and reason. Moreover, he does this in ways that we think recall the opening of Aristotle’s *Metaphysics* – albeit with a Neoplatonic twist which relates them to the moments in the metaphysics of emanation. Thus intelligence corresponds to ‘remaining in the cause’, while reason corresponds to procession and experience – correlated with the inward movement of what is external – becomes reversion.

The argument concerning the superiority of the pleasures of the just person also seems to hint at an Aristotelian connection. Proclus off-handedly remarks on ‘the things that are concomitant (*parepomenos*) with the ends – which of course some people suppose to be themselves the ends’. We take this to be a casual reference to the idea that pleasure is something *supervenient* (*epigignomenon*) upon the perfection of an activity.<sup>3</sup> Proclus’ exegesis of the argument is otherwise unremarkable. It simply makes the point that the pleasures of the philosopher are more real since they occur within what is more real than the body (i.e. the soul) and arise from what is more real than bodily things like food or sex (i.e. the Forms). But as van Riel has argued, Proclus’ own theory of pleasure seems to be a hybrid between Plato’s and Aristotle’s views on the subject.<sup>4</sup> So it is perhaps unsurprising that even a straightforward summary of Plato’s argument should contain some Aristotelian resonance.

Perhaps the most original aspect of Essay 15 is its attempt to unify the various themes treated in book X of the *Republic*. This final book seems so disconnected to what comes before that interpreters have long suggested that it is at least thematically discontinuous and possibly even a later addition tacked on to the dialogue at some subsequent stage. Even those who defend the underlying unity of Book X with the rest of the dialogue concede the appearance of discontinuity and the disparate

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Aristotle, *EN* 1174b31.    <sup>4</sup> Van Riel (2000).

character of its content. Pappas' comments are atypical of contemporary interpreters only in the boldness and charm of his metaphor:

Reading straight through from Book 9 to Book 10 is an experience as abrupt as turning off a highway to wind along twisted and unpaved back roads. From the comparison between justice and injustice that took two books to prepare, and that hearkened back to an intricate argument spanning the *Republic*, we move to a slap-dash collection of arguments about the arts, only tangentially related to the dialogue as a whole. Even more suddenly, this discussion lurches into an argument for the immortality of the soul; this argument in turn is followed by a myth, warning of the otherworldly penalty for leading an unjust life, that apparently takes back the *Republic's* long and patient defence of justice in terms of this world. Then the dialogue ends.<sup>5</sup>

Proclus has an answer to this, but we suspect most modern interpreters won't like it. Book X is a fitting culmination to the *Republic* since its trajectory follows the pathway to redemption prescribed for those who would become philosopher-rulers. The discussion of painting and poetry offers to purify us from the material images of the world of becoming and the phantasms of pseudo-education. The discussion of the soul's immortality corresponds to the reversion upon the self that follows purification. Finally, the myth of Er ascends to the celestial cosmos and thus corresponds to the soul's reversion upon its higher causes (*in Remp.* II 85.10–86.3). Thus Proclus contends that Neoplatonic psychology provides the map that makes perfect sense of Pappas' seemingly twisted and unpaved back roads.

Apart from this synthesis, the contents of Essay 15 stick fairly close to the arguments of *Republic* X and offer less of interest to the reader of Proclus than the context might lead one to expect. Thus the principal philosophical aim of Proclus' exegesis of the claim that the painter is at three removes is to show that he does not imitate an imitation of a Form. Sensible artefacts, like a bed, are *not* images of anything found in the intelligible realm. Proclus is in fact much more explicit that Socrates does not mean exactly what he seems to mean at *Republic* 597a:

the objects that have been made as images in relation to the intelligible realm (cf. 29c1) are objects that exist by nature (*phusei*), and not those that exist by artistic skill (*technêi*). The skilled craftsman does not make what he makes in accordance with certain [ideal] forms, even if Socrates in the *Republic* (596b) seems to say this. But the subject matter of that passage concerns a paradigm. It is not about the actual Forms, but about the forms used down here. After all, he says that their maker is the god and Demiurge, but he is not the demiurgic maker of the Forms.

(Proclus, *in Tim.* I 344.8–13)<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Pappas (1995), 178.      <sup>6</sup> Trans. Runia and Share (2008).

The question of whether there are Forms for artefacts is one that occupies Proclus a good bit in other works, but one would not guess that from Essay 15.<sup>7</sup>

Proclus' treatment of the argument for the soul's immortality (*Rep.* 698d–12a) is somewhat more interesting. As is often the case, Proclus takes the opportunity to clarify exactly which parts of the soul are immortal according to Plato. It is only the rational part to which this argument applies. This interpretive task is set for the Neoplatonists by the apparently sweeping statement by Socrates in *Phaedrus* 245c5 that *all* soul is immortal, while the *Timaeus* calls the irrational parts of the soul a 'mortal form of life' (*Tim.* 69c7). Proclus' own view is that the irrational parts of the soul accompany not the material body, but the pneumatic one. They thus survive the death of the earthly body and are appropriately disciplined in the afterlife described in the myth of Er. The pneumatic body, however, does not endure through the rational soul's *apokatastasis* or return to its native star; cf. in *Tim.* III 234.8–238.23. So while the irrational parts of the soul may be spoken of as immortal relative to the ensouled body of flesh and blood, they are not immortal in the same full-blooded sense in which the rational soul is.

The complicated status of the irrational soul crops up in the context of the Book X argument because it looks as if the argument offered there for immortality could generalise to these irrational and mortal parts of the soul. After all, spirit and desire are implicated in the moral vices that are both the greatest *per se* evil of the soul in general – proper evils which are also assumed to be not such as to destroy it. Avoiding this implication requires Proclus to do some careful work with the argument of *Republic* 608e–611a. Proclus begins with Socrates' claim that for each thing there is one congenital (*symphyton*, 609a9) evil through which each thing perishes, if it is capable of perishing at all. But Proclus adds a further distinction between such evils leading to the destruction of the object *per se* or *per accidens*. He has in mind here the objection that clever students inevitably make to Socrates' claim that the soul's congenital evil (moral vice) does not destroy it: 'What about the criminal who gets the death penalty?' This is *per accidens* destruction – not *per se*, since it does not happen inevitably. (After all, some criminals escape justice.) Finally, Proclus adds, or perhaps makes explicit, a further distinction among 'greatest evils'.

The very greatest of evils is one whose presence does not actually *destroy* the subject in which it inheres but instead merely makes it bad in perpetuity. The justification for this is that existing in a bad condition is worse than not existing at all. The short-term goal of this distinction is

<sup>7</sup> d'Hoine (2006).

to vindicate the claim that moral vice is worse for the soul than disease is for the body: disease puts the body in a bad condition, but then makes up for it somewhat by destroying it and putting it out of its misery. Yet moral vice does worse things to the soul by causing it to be bad, but without removing it from existence in this bad condition (*in Remp.* II 89.28–90.1). So, somewhat paradoxically, what we might term ‘non-lethal evils’ are worse than the lethal ones. The poor sword that perishes by its greatest evil, rust, is at least fortunate enough to be rid of its humiliating and degrading rust when the rust destroys it, for then the rust is gone too in a kind of kamikaze attack on its underlying subject.

Now, the irrational parts of the soul are implicated in the moral vices: a soul is unjust when, for instance, appetite plays the role that reason should. Does the irrational soul depart the body still encrusted with its vices? Proclus thinks the answer must be Yes. So these moral vices look like they have a claim to being the greatest of evils and, moreover, are non-lethal to their subject. So the argument presented here seems to prove too much for a Neoplatonist: it proves the immortality of *both* the rational and the irrational parts of the soul. This follows from a kind of ambiguity in the notion of ‘greatest evil’. Some things have only level-1 greatest evils. Like the rusty sword, there’s an end in sight to level-1 greatest evils. But level-2 greatest evils are non-lethal and all the worse for that. If we assume that subjects are immune to perishing except through their greatest proper evils, and if we assume that the irrational soul in fact has a level-2 proper evil, then it appears that the irrational soul will be just as imperishable as the rational one – a conclusion that Proclus does not welcome.

Fortunately, the imperishability principle is qualified by a higher-order principle: nothing can be a level-2 greatest proper evil for a thing if it is *natural* for that thing. Moral vices like cowardice and lack of discipline are irrational and so are unnatural to the *rational* part of the soul but, in a sense, natural to the *irrational* part (91.11–15). (This principle presumably does not cover level-1 proper evils, since rust is perfectly natural for swords and other metallic objects.) Thus the potential disastrous consequence of a Platonic argument establishing that the irrational soul is immortal in exactly the same sense as the rational soul is averted.

The least interesting part of Essay 15 is the last part. In it Proclus provides a textual division of the myth of Er. We will have much more to say about his reading of the myth in volume III. We simply observe now that Essay 15 ends on an uncharacteristic note. Having summarised very, very briefly the symbolic significance of some of the major elements in the myth, Proclus says that these pithy summaries are ‘seeds



for contemplation' for the use of those who wish to work through them and unfold their meaning. We think it is unusual for Proclus to explicitly invite his audience to harvest the fruits of allegorical interpretation on their own. If the *Republic Commentary* were an entirely finished work, completed and edited by Proclus, this summary would presumably point forward to Essay 16. But the fact that some of the seams in the work are still showing does not reduce it to an *ad hoc* collection of disparate materials.

81 *On the Three Arguments Showing that the  
Just Life is Happier than the Unjust*

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5 There are three arguments in the ninth book of the *Republic* showing the happiness (*eudaimonia*) of the most just life and the wretchedness of the unjust. The first is made by analogy of ways of life with constitutions, the second from the means of judging, by which [types of individual] are judged more or less than one another,<sup>8</sup> the third on the basis of the perfection in their activities, whether it is unmixed in any way with the opposite, or whether it is mixed. Since for some people the goal (*telos*) is pleasure, but for others it is intelligence (*phronêsis*), if it should be shown that the just man is superior in each individually and in both together, he would with good reason win the prize for victory, even if [his goodness] should escape the notice of both gods and human beings. This then was the challenge lying before Socrates.

15 <I. FIRST ARGUMENT (577c1–580c8): 81.14–27>

So the argument from the analogy with types of constitution seems to attempt to make its case on both bases,<sup>9</sup> in that it shows that the monarchic constitution<sup>10</sup> is filled with a way of life that is endowed with intelligence,<sup>11</sup> because it puts in order the city as a whole and is the most

<sup>8</sup> Festugière rightly declared this sentence ‘so elliptical as to be almost unintelligible’ (vol. 2, 191). Certainly, Proclus is assuming that we remember our *Republic* very well to make sense of it. The three means of judging (*kritêria*) are experience (*empeiria*), practical intelligence (*phronêsis*), and reason (*logos*) (582e6). The three types of person who are judging are the philosopher, the lover of gain (*philokerdês*), and the lover of honour (*philotimos*). Each has their own appropriate type of pleasure, and Socrates argues that the philosopher is superior to the other two in each of these means of judging (582a8–e9).

<sup>9</sup> That is, on the basis both of pleasure and of intelligence.

<sup>10</sup> The political order or constitution of the ideal city is here characterised as monarchical on the basis of Plato’s enumeration of the types of men whose happiness is to be compared at *Rep.* 580b2–4: καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ἐξῆς πέντε ὄντας κρίνει, βασιλικόν, τιμοκρατικόν, ὀλιγαρχικόν, δημοκρατικόν, τυραννικόν.

<sup>11</sup> Compare *Rep.* 521a2–4 where Socrates characterises the political order in which the guardians rule in these terms (ἐν μόνῃ γὰρ αὐτῇ ἀρξουσιν οἱ τῶ ὄντι πλούσιοι, οὐ χρυσοῦ ἀλλ’ οὐ δεῖ τὸν εὐδαίμονα πλουτεῖν, ζωῆς ἀγαθῆς τε καὶ ἔμφρονος) with the life of the

pleasurable in that it is the only constitution which is free (577c) and in accord with itself. The tyrannical constitution is full of the opposite qualities. It is without pleasure, since tyrants are always suspicious of those who are ruled, living in fear (578a4) and envy and distrust and all such feelings, and since those who are ruled live under compulsion and lamentation (578a7) and a way of life entirely against their will. And it has no share of intelligence, if indeed intelligence, when it is present, saves those who have it. But the tyrannical constitution is the off-spring of one appetite,<sup>12</sup> which is a criminal one,<sup>13</sup> shackling other ones and reason itself, which is the recipient of intelligence.

<II. SECOND ARGUMENT (582A4–583A11):  
81.27–82.16>

The manner of the attempted proof which sets out from the means of judging (*kritêrion*) also proceeds from intelligence itself, in the role both of material and of instrument.<sup>14</sup> When it is said that everything is judged either by intelligence (*phronêsis*) or by reason (*logos*) or by experience (*empeiria*, 582a5), it is clear, I suppose, that the faculty which truly judges the worth (*axia*) of the things that exist is intelligence (*phronêsis*), for which reason some have said that it is the goal of human life. But experience precedes intelligence, since it is a kind of understanding (*gnôsis*)<sup>15</sup> which runs ahead of it, and provides material to intelligence. This is because those who are going to be endowed with intelligence need experience as well, but only as an underlying prior foundation, since they themselves have imposed the bond of causation, but experience states merely that something is so.<sup>16</sup> Reason (*logos*) thirdly, makes understandable and makes believable all the things which intelligence has discerned, employing the methods through which it reveals the internal activity of intelligence. And while experience is a motion from the outside inwards, reason is a procession from the inside outwards,

cosmos which serves as the paradigm for these philosophical rulers at *Tim.* 36e4–5 (θεῖαν ἀρχὴν ἤρξατο ἀπαύστου καὶ ἔμφρονος βίου πρὸς τὸν σύμπαντα χρόνον).

<sup>12</sup> Cf. 573d for lust, the internal tyrant.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. 571b for the criminal or lawless desires. Lust or *erôs* in the negative sense seems to be their root.

<sup>14</sup> We accept Kroll's suggestion of ὁργάνου for the manuscript's ὁργάνων, as did Festugière.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Aristotle, *Metaphys.* 981a16, where experience is said to be a *gnôsis* of particulars.

<sup>16</sup> Aristotle's *Metaphysics* 981a28–30 seems to be apposite. There Aristotle claims that the reason we respect the person who possesses *technê* over the person who merely has experience is that: τοῦτο δ' ὅτι οἱ μὲν τὴν αἰτίαν ἴσασιν οἱ δ' οὐ. οἱ μὲν γὰρ ἔμπειροι τὸ ὅτι μὲν ἴσασι, διότι δ' οὐκ ἴσασιν· οἱ δὲ τὸ διότι καὶ τὴν αἰτίαν γνωρίζουσιν.

and intelligence is a judgement which remains within, since the soul awakens it within itself.<sup>17</sup>

<III. THIRD ARGUMENT (583BI–587BIO):  
82.17–83.2>

It is clear that the argument from the difference between pleasures attempts its proof from no other basis than from the things that are concomitant with the ends<sup>18</sup> – which of course some people [wrongly] suppose to be themselves the ends. Therefore this argument<sup>19</sup> shows from these points that the life of the just possesses more of the good than does the life of the unjust in three ways, because it is superior in the form of pleasure, in the subject who experiences the pleasure (*to hêdomenon*), and in that from which pleasure arises. And this last is the object of pleasure (*to hêston*). To some people the pleasure is pure,<sup>20</sup> and that which takes pleasure is more truly existent (since it is the soul), and that from which pleasure arises is the genuinely existent and true object. For others though the pleasure is mixed with pain, and that which

<sup>17</sup> Alternatively, with Usener's conjecture of αὐτὴν for the MS' αὐτὴν, we might translate 'since the soul awakens itself within itself', that is, *logos* is an internal process of the soul gaining self-knowledge.

<sup>18</sup> Ὁ δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν ἡδονῶν τῆς διαφορᾶς λόγος δῆλον ὡς οὐδαμόθεν ἄλλοθεν ἢ ἀπὸ τῶν παρεπομένων ἐπιχειρεῖ τοῖς τέλεσιν, ἃ δὴ καὶ αὐτὰ τέλη τινὲς νομίζουσιν. On the basis of *Chald. Philos.* 207.15–17 (*inter alia*), van Riel (2000) argues that Proclus' theory of pleasure resembles Plotinus' in being a fusion of Aristotelian and Platonic ideas. The notion that pleasure is a concomitant of certain activities (which are, in fact, the goal) is part of the Aristotelian legacy. Thus in the passage at hand, παρεπομένον plays the role of ἐπιγινόμενον in Aristotle's famously difficult remark at 1174b31–3 τέλει οὐδὲ τὴν ἐνέργειαν ἢ ἡδονὴ οὐχ ὡς ἡ ἐξίς ἐνυπάρχουσα, ἀλλ' ὡς ἐπιγινόμενον τι τέλος.

<sup>19</sup> With Festugière adopting Usener's suggestion of οὗτος for οὕτως.

<sup>20</sup> Plato's argument in fact sits rather awkwardly with Proclus' own account of pleasure according to which the philosopher knowing the higher realities is *beyond* pleasure or pain; cf. *in Remp.* 124.5–10. As van Riel points out, there is a tension in Proclus' notion of 'pure pleasure'. We can speak of an 'unimpeded activity' of philosophical contemplation (thus pleasure in one of Aristotle's senses seems apposite), but we cannot speak of a return to a natural condition, so that more Platonically inflected notion of pleasure has no place (cf. *in Tim.* III 287.17–20 and *in Remp.* I 226.26–7). Proclus defends a view of pleasure that involves a fusion of these Aristotelian and Platonic notions. His preferred way of describing the 'pleasure' that the philosopher derives from filling his soul with what is most real is 'divine ease' *θεία ῥαστώνη*; cf. *Plat. Theol.* I §15 76.1–5. He borrows this notion of ease from (*inter alia*) *Rep.* 525c5–6 where the philosophers study mathematics both for the sake of practical aims (like counting their troops in war) but also for 'ease in turning the soul itself from Becoming to Truth and Being' (αὐτῆς τῆς ψυχῆς ῥαστόνῃς μεταστροφῆς ἀπὸ γενέσεως ἐπ' ἀλήθειαν τε καὶ οὐσίαν). See van Riel (2000), 127.

<III. Third argument>

takes pleasure is the body, and the object of pleasure is a bodily one since it exists in matter, all of which things are not truly existent. Since these things differ in this way, the pleasure of the just is better than that of the unjust, so that the life of the just is in general better than their life too. Therefore according to all arguments living justly is happier than living unjustly. And this was the object of our enquiry.

83

<Summary in the Form of a Table: 83>

In three ways the just life is happier than the unjust, and they are these:

First argument by analogy of lives to types of constitution	Second argument from the means of judging ( <i>kritêrion</i> ), by which those who are judged have more or less than one another	Third argument from perfection in activity		
		Perfection without mixture, like that of the just	Mixed perfection like that of the unjust	
from the tyrannical constitution, since it is without pleasure due to suspicion of those ruled, and is a life with no share of intelligence and without free choice	by intelligence ( <i>phronêsis</i> )	because the form of the pleasure is pure	because the form of pleasure is mixed with suffering	because the object of pleasure is bodily and false
	by reason ( <i>logos</i> )	because that which takes pleasure is the soul	because that which takes pleasure is a body	
	by experience	because the object of pleasure is really existent and true		
		because that which takes pleasure is the soul		
from the monarchic constitution which is full of intelligent life, since it puts in order the whole of the city, and is most pleasant, since it alone is free and dear to itself				

*The major sections of the Tenth Book*

84

Criticism of poetry as mimetic but not educational

Whatever is a copy, is at third remove from the truth, and is an imitation not of the universal but of the partial object

That poetry is mimetic and because of this is not useful for civic life

That poetry has neither true knowledge nor correct opinion of the things about which it speaks

That poetry stirs the passions: tragedy arousing the love of grief, comedy the love of laughter, and for this reason it harms souls

On the immortality of souls

That the soul is immortal

What kind of soul is immortal

On the providence of the gods and daemons concerning souls which are descending into becoming and those which are transcending it

On the different allotted spheres (*lêxis*) and the judges

On the arrangement of the cosmos

On lives and lots and ordering of souls

How souls descend into bodies

**On the Principal Topics in the Tenth Book of the *Republic***

85

<1. INTRODUCTION: 85.3–86.3>

The Tenth Book is divided into three principal topics. The first of these is directed towards a critique of poetry on the grounds that it is mimetic, but not educative of souls. The second establishes the immortality of the soul and reveals its kinship with the divine. The third provides the myth itself, which exhibits providence as a whole, both daemonic and divine, which governs souls both descending into becoming and transcending becoming, and the multi-form ways of each. These being the three subjects, it is clear that the first proposes to separate us from

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material images (*eidôlon*) and to lead us up from the illusions (*phantasia*) of false learning, because these draw us down to the very last of  
 15 existent things, which are in fact partial (*merikos*) and imitative of existent things, but do not truly exist themselves, and [to lead us up] from what is simply and entirely a fictive life. The topic arranged after that  
 reverts us upon ourselves and leads us back into our own proper life and immortality, which we possess essentially (*kat' ousian*), and into the  
 20 simplicity of our own *hypostasis*. For indeed it is shown that the soul is simple, even if it is imagined to be a composite because of the irrational element, and that it is immortal and not of mortal form (*thnêtoeidês*),  
 and that it is a thing akin to the divine, even if ...<sup>21</sup> yoked together with bodies. The third topic also brings about our reversion, but towards the  
 25 things prior to us and to the oversight of the superior beings and providence and fate (*heimarmenê*) which descends to us, since we possess an amphibious nature, which both ascends and descends. Indeed the lives  
 86 and the lots<sup>22</sup> show that the ways down are under the supervision of the gods, and those who purify us in Hades or the punishing daemones place the lives which occur after generation (*genesis*) under the control of those who are superior [to us].

<II. CONDEMNATION OF MIMETIC ART:

86.4–89.5>

5 These then are the principal topics of this book, but the first topic is divided again into four. The first part of it is that which shows what exactly an imitation (*mimêma*) is and what mimetic art is. And he achieves this by making the distinction that the universal (*to katholou*) and the particular object are different in the case both of natural (*physikos*) and  
 10 of manufactured objects (*tekhnêtos*). And the natural object participates primarily in the general, and the manufactured object is a partial image (*eidôlon*) of this partial object. For example among natural objects, there is the form of the man and some particular man, and the image (*eikôn*) of some particular man, and among manufactured objects there is the form of the bed and some particular bed, and that which seems like a bed. And among artificial objects there are three makers of beds. The  
 15 artist is the maker of the imitation, the bed-maker of some particular bed, and a god is the maker of the form of the bed. For whatever

<sup>21</sup> Usener, followed by Kroll, detects a lacuna after κἄν in 85.22. It appears to be a brief one, and Festugière translates Schöll's conjecture, φαίνεται λελωβημένον: 'even if it appears mutilated when yoked together with bodies'.

<sup>22</sup> That is, the choices of future lives which Plato relates in the Myth of Er and the drawing of lots (617d–621b).



eternally exists (like the form) a god is responsible, and the craftsman is responsible for some particular bed itself in accordance with the form, and the maker of images is responsible for the imitation. And among natural objects a god is responsible for the form, the father is responsible for a particular person in each case,<sup>23</sup> and once more the artist is responsible for the likeness.

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And making these distinctions, he defines an imitation as the image (*eidōlon*) of some particular thing, which is third removed from the form of the bed. What exists truly is the form of the bed, and not some particular bed – because this particular bed has arisen along with other different beds, being a different thing in distinction to the form nor, to an even greater extent, is the image [of a bed] really existent. It follows that the mimetic art is craftsman of that which is third removed from the truth. Nor is it the case that a particular bed is an imitation (*mimēma*) of the form, but is rather a specific receptacle (*hypodochē*) [of the form]. From which fact it is clear that he does not take the form [of which the image is an imitation] to be the intelligible form (because then [the image] would be a perceptible imitation of the intelligible form, as Timaeus said (48e5–7)), but it is instead the form existing in those very particulars, which of course participate in the [intelligible] form. Therefore the [copy] of this object does not participate in an intelligible [form].<sup>24</sup> So the mimetic art is the crafter of that which is third from the truth, and the form is the truth, since it truly is and only is; for this reason it is only a bed and nothing else. From this the imitation of the bed is at three removes, because it does not participate in the form of the bed, but is rendered similar to that which does participate in it.

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The second part after this in the first main topic is that which shows how all poetry is a kind of imitation (598d7–601b8). And he shows it in this way. It is clear that every poet imitates words and actions of human lives. And that these are of various kinds is also clear. These are, for example, generals, lawgivers, orators, craftsmen, shipwrights. Therefore the poet either does in fact know these same things, the number and kind of them that he imitates, for example commanding an army, giving a speech, making laws, building ships, or else he does not know them, but merely imitates them through certain apparent resemblances. But if someone knew these things he would not choose to remain engaged in the actions of the worse kind of person, depriving himself of the

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<sup>23</sup> Translating the MS' τυχὸν ('in each case') rather than τυχόντος, suggested by Usener (in Schöll 47.23).

<sup>24</sup> This appears to be the sense, though there is a lacuna here at 87.1. Kroll suggests seven characters, Schöll four to five.

greater, unless for the sake of play<sup>25</sup> he should practise making images  
before the true things. For no one would work earnestly on the worse  
20 instead of the better, if he had the capacity for both. So the remaining  
possibility is that he works at imitations out of ignorance of true things.  
It follows then that if every poet pursues imitations in earnest, and every  
person who pursues imitations in earnest but pursues nothing else is an  
imitator (*mimêtês*), therefore every poet is an imitator, if he is not able  
88 to do anything better than imitating. Nothing confirms this more than  
that none of the poets, in so far as he is a poet, is a statesman (*politikos*),  
because no statesman is an imitator, but every poet is an imitator.<sup>26</sup>

5 The third part of this same topic is the argument that every poet is  
neither a person who has rational knowledge (*epistêmôn*) of the things  
which he imitates, nor one who has true opinions (601b9–602b5).  
There are three arts concerning each thing: one which employs as an  
instrument the object created (as for example the art of horse-riding  
uses a bridle), another which crafts (as that of the bridle-maker does),  
and another which imitates the real bridle (as the art of the painter  
10 does). The first of these arts is the one with rational knowledge, be-  
cause it knows the purpose of the bridle and its use – because the final  
(*telikos*) cause is the principal one (*kuriôtatos*), and he who knows the  
principal cause has knowledge of a thing entirely, and the one who  
employs an instrument knows that instrument's final cause. The sec-  
ond art has a correct opinion about a bridle, because the bridle-maker  
15 learns that a bridle must be a certain way, learning from the person  
who uses the bridle, and although he is ignorant of the cause (*aitia*), he  
makes a bridle to these specifications. And the art of painting imitates  
the appearance (*eidos*) of the bridle, looking to the shape of the one  
made by a craftsman, knowing neither its use, as does the art of using  
the bridle, nor the manner of its production, as does the art which  
20 crafts a bridle. Therefore the imitator (*mimêtês*) is one who possesses  
neither true knowledge nor correct opinion about the things which he  
imitates.

The fourth main argument (602c–606d) after these is that poetry is a  
source of harm to those who listen to it, because it strangles the ration-  
al part of the soul, but increases the emotional faculty (*to pathêtikon*),  
because this faculty loves pleasure and grief. While tragedy makes it  
25 love lamentation, comedy makes it love laughter. What need is there  
to speak about the masses? But even in the case of those who are

<sup>25</sup> The reference to 'play' may be a faint echo of *Phaedrus* 276b5–6.

<sup>26</sup> This is slightly ironic given that the cosmos serves as a paradigm for the ideal city. The difference, however, is what one creates images of, that is, whether one produces copies of the intelligible forms or copies of the copies of the intelligible forms.

reasonable and of moderate virtue,<sup>27</sup> it causes trouble to the emotional faculty, because they consider it nothing improper to feel pity along with the misfortunes of others and to laugh along with the disgraces of others, but since they do these things first in play, they later do them in earnest because of their habituation to them.<sup>28</sup> Therefore if poetry is mimetic of emotions, and that which is mimetic of the emotions increases the emotional faculty, and that which increases the emotional faculty is unsuited to well-governed cities, the conclusion is obvious.

<III. IMMORTALITY OF THE RATIONAL SOUL:

89.6–92.19>

So the first principal topic is divided into the parts discussed, and the section concerning the soul is separated into two. The first part of it is that which shows that the soul is immortal, while the second part defines precisely what kind of soul one must consider to be immortal.

<A. The soul is immortal: 89.9–92.3>

<1. Presentation of the doctrine: 89.9–90.10>

So the first part proceeds through the following arguments: the soul is not destroyed by its own proper evil (*kakia*). That which is not destroyed by its own proper evil is everlasting, because one thing destroys, which is its proper evil (*to kakon*). So that which is not destroyed by that which alone can destroy it is everlasting. Therefore the soul is everlasting. The argument sets out from cause of destruction for destructible things, and it is not simply a syllogism, but a demonstration which gathers what destruction is on the basis of its cause.<sup>29</sup> For the sake of articulating this argument he makes several definitions.

<sup>27</sup> The ‘greatest accusation’ against theatre (605c–606d): It creates a kind of cognitive dissonance even in *good* people since they enjoy the portrayal of characters reacting to adversity exactly as they would not allow themselves to react.

<sup>28</sup> In Essay 5 (I 49.13–51.25) Proclus responds to the Aristotelian claim that theatre could educate the passions and contribute toward moderation of the passions (*metriopatheia*). His fundamental premise is that the person who enjoys imitations becomes such as the objects of imitation are.

<sup>29</sup> καὶ ἔστιν οὐχ ἀπλῶς συλλογισμὸς, ἀλλὰ ἀπόδειξις ἀναιροῦσα τὴν φθορὰν ἀπ’ αἰτίας. This mysterious contrast contains interesting verbal echoes of the contrast between *dianoia* and *noêsis* in the doubly divided line. Proclus says that this argument ‘sets out from’ (*bôrmêtai*) the cause of destruction for destructible things. At *Rep.* 511b Socrates says that the dialectician does not treat his hypotheses as first principles (*archai*) but as steps (*ekbaseis*) or starting points (*hormai*). Moreover, these hypotheses are subsequently destroyed (*anairousa*, 533c7) in the process of dialectical reasoning. Long ago,

1. In particular one definition is that there is one fault (*kakon*) for each destructible thing, among animals, among plants, among things without soul, as for instance rotting for wood, rust for plants, ophthalmia for animals.<sup>30</sup>
2. A second definition is that it is necessary that something does not take on the cause of its destruction incidentally (*kata symbebêkos*), as for instance when injustice destroys, because the one who is unjust pays the penalty and is executed. In this instance injustice destroys incidentally.<sup>31</sup> If it destroyed in itself (*kath' auto*), it would do this everywhere and in all cases.
3. The third definition is that the greatest fault is not one which causes death (for this kind of fault liberates the possessor from the very fault itself), but the fault which does not destroy that in which it is. And this depends upon the concept which states that not being is a lesser evil than being in a bad condition.<sup>32</sup> So it follows that the

Baltzly (1996) argued that what is envisioned in Plato's description of dialectic is a conclusion based on a self-refutation argument and that this method was illustrated in Plato's dialogues. Note that Proclus here approaches a self-refutation argument. The proponent of the view that the soul is mortal (and who accepts that moral vice is its flaw and, moreover, that this flaw is not fatal) in effect asserts that the soul is destroyed through non-fatal causes: a contradiction. Thus the immortality of the soul is established unhypothetically from its causes since the assertion that the soul is mortal is self-refuting or involves an inherent contradiction (at least given certain shared assumptions about a thing's proper evil).

<sup>30</sup> The abbreviation of Plato here makes for a puzzling statement. Plato had Socrates say that ophthalmia was the fault for eyes, some other disease for the whole body (608e6, ff.). Proclus most likely expects his readers or listeners to remember this, rather than really believing that ophthalmia is the unique proper fault of animals in general.

<sup>31</sup> Here Proclus transposes Plato's discussion at 609e into the Aristotelian language of *per se* and accidental causes. It is not clear that his transposition is entirely warranted. When, to take an Aristotelian example, the golfer heals he is a *per accidens* cause, while the doctor (who happens to also golf) is the *per se* cause. (Or perhaps, even more strictly, the science of medicine in his soul heals.) By contrast, Plato's claim is that the salmonella-infested sausage roll is not the cause of death for the one who eats it. Rather, it is whatever malady the bacteria produce in the eater's body. Cf. *Rep* 609e1–6 'Εννόει γάρ, ἣν δ' ἐγώ, ὦ Γλαύκων, ὅτι οὐδ' ὑπὸ τῆς τῶν σιτίων πονηρίας, ἢ ἂν ἡ αὐτῶν ἐκείνων, εἴτε παλαιότης εἴτε σαπρότης εἴτε ἡτισοῦν οὔσα, οὐκ οἰόμεθα δεῖν σῶμα ἀπολλυθῆαι· ἄλλ' ἐὰν μὲν ἐμποιῇ ἡ αὐτῶν πονηρία τῶν σιτίων τῷ σώματι σώματος μοχθηρίαν, φήσομεν αὐτὸ δι' ἐκεῖνα ὑπὸ τῆς αὐτοῦ κακίας νόσου οὔσης ἀπολωλέναι. It's not clear this is quite the same point. Aristotle's point seems to be that the person who cites the sausage roll as the cause of death cites only the *per accidens* cause. To make clear why the killer roll is a killer, one needs to address it from the proper perspective: it kills *qua tainted* sausage roll, just as the golfer cures *qua* doctor. Generalising from Plato's example, he seemingly thinks that the roll is not a killer at all. Rather, the body's own proper evil destroys it.

<sup>32</sup> Kroll and Festugière both compare with *in Alc.* 144.4; 337.11 (Westerink). Festugière adds that the same general proposition is repeated below at 90.25.

*per se* evil of the soul is greater than the *per se* evil of the body, for instance injustice is greater than disease, because while injustice makes the soul bad without destroying it, disease makes bad *and* destroys the body which has it.

The demonstration depends upon these definitions when they have been made: the soul is not destroyed by its own proper, *per se* evil, and that which is not destroyed by its own proper *per se* evil is everlasting, therefore the soul is everlasting. And even if someone were to say that when the body dies the soul is destroyed, it would be necessary for this person to say that the body, when it is destroyed, produces the soul's own fault in it, so that it might be destroyed by the evil that belongs to it, rather than the evil that is alien to it. But if this were so, it would necessarily follow that those who are ill become more unjust and more evil with respect to all other faults. But this is absurd. Therefore the soul would not be destroyed by the destruction of the body.

<2. Difficulties and responses: 90.10–91.18>

- a. If someone should be puzzled, as to how ensoulment (*empsychia*) is destroyed through the dissolution of the body in which it is, we shall say that the dissolution of the living body, in so far as it is living, is also a fault for the ensoulment. [This must be so] since the ensoulment is in fact *in* the subject (*hypokeimenon*), and everything which exists in the subject requires the nature of the subject in order to be. Therefore if its being is a common property of both, and its non-being is also a common property, and the cause of non-being to either in itself is also a cause of non-being to the remaining part [of the composite], for this same reason, it is not [a cause of non-being] by accident (*kata symbebêkos*).
- b. Someone may move on to consider the irrational part (*alogos*) itself, which Timaeus clearly calls 'a mortal form of life' (69c7), and may be puzzled as to how that also is not immortal, which is not destroyed by injustice and cowardice and lack of discipline (*akolasia*), since these are its greatest faults, if these are indeed not lethal. For that which is not destroyed by the greatest faults would not be destroyed by lesser ones. And this is credible because of the principle established earlier, which states that the fault which is not lethal is greater than the lethal one. If someone should be puzzled by this, we shall answer that these things are the greatest of faults, but in rational things (*logikos*), while in irrational ones, they are in a certain way natural (*kata physin*) to them. This is because the irrational parts are beast-like, and to such things operating irrationally is natural, and behaving with reason is unnatural. For example for dogs barking is

- 5 natural, and for donkeys gluttony is. And if these are not the greatest faults<sup>33</sup> for the irrational part, it is no surprise that it too is destroyed along with the subject in which it exists, just as the ensoulment is destroyed. So this occurs only whenever the rational part is altogether separated from that which lives along with it.
- 10 c. If someone enquires as to how then the soul's wickedness does not entirely destroy it, if indeed it is the definition of a fault (*kakon*) that it is destructive to that of which it is a fault, we shall say that injustice and lack of discipline are destructive, but they are destructive to the intellective and discursive *activities* of the rational soul and to correct opinion, while conversely they increase the activities of the irrational parts. For that reason we were saying that [these qualities] belong naturally to those parts, because the rational and the irrational soul have opposite tendencies, and that which is natural to one puts the remaining part of the soul into a state contrary to nature.<sup>34</sup> For that reason the total separation of the irrational from the rational soul extinguishes the life [of the irrational]. Therefore
- 15 the fault in a soul corrupts something of the activities of the rational part, and in this way each fault is destructive to that of which it is a fault: it is destructive to the same extent as it is a fault.

<3. Corollary: 91.19–92.3>

- 19 This then is how the present discussion has situated the previous main point. After this he introduced a corollary (*porisma*) as follows: that souls do not become more numerous nor less (611a4–9). If they should become less numerous, one of them will be destroyed. And it has been shown that it is indestructible (*aphthartos*). If they should become more numerous, they will arise from mortal things. But this is impossible, so

<sup>33</sup> That is to say, they are not non-lethal greatest faults. See the discussion of this point in our Introduction to Essays 14 and 15.

<sup>34</sup> It is unclear how comfortably this view fits alongside Proclus' more nuanced presentation in Essay 7 at 207.14–210.6. There, Proclus distinguished the intrinsic from the relational virtues of each part of the soul. When the spirited part of the soul, for instance, pursues its goals of honour and winning without regard to the commands of reason, there is a sense in which it acts in accordance with its own intrinsic excellence. Proclus explicitly says, moving to the level of political class instead of psychic part, that the businessman who ruthlessly pursues gain by any means whatsoever manifests the intrinsic virtue of the appetitive part of the soul, but is only dishonest (*mochthêros*) insofar as he is a subject to the authority of the *polis*. If we identify rationality with the proper exercise of each irrational part's relational virtues, then there is a sense in which each part's intrinsic (and thus natural?) excellence is contrary to reason. If not irrational, then at least arational. The source of the underlying tension is, as always, the composite soul, which simultaneously has parts whose natures are at odds with reason and yet the composite is itself, in some sense, natural.

<IV. The myth of Er>

that all things do not become immortal. Yet each thing that comes to be, comes to be from something. So if some soul should arise from the mortal, and having come to be should become immortal, the mortal will become immortal, since it becomes a soul. Now, since souls will constantly be coming into being, the mortal as a whole will be consumed in the generation of these things which are immortal, which will not return anything to the generation of the mortal. You may conclude from these points that the number of souls has been intrinsically limited, if indeed, because of their immortality, they neither become more nor less numerous, and have a limit (*boros*), but not an infinite number.

<B. The immortal soul is the rational soul: 92.4–19>

He has judged the second major discussion to be necessary because of the irrational soul. Since we call the whole thing soul,<sup>35</sup> it was necessary to define which kind of soul he says is the everlasting one. So in doing this, he defines the rational soul alone as being of this kind, and he shows this by saying (611e) that you should see its immortality by looking to its love of wisdom (*philosophia*), and the things that it grasps and those to which it is akin. But he denies that the whole soul along with its affects (*pathos*) is immortal. In this way he clearly separates the divine soul from that which is subject to affect (*pathêtikos*), and places it in the immortal, and at the same time hands down the argument based on the soul's potential likeness to the divine.

As well as giving what is necessary, he has appended to this discussion the argument concerning the rewards which exist for those who live justly in the present life (612b8–613e5). This is in reply to the arguments which those of Glaucon's point of view have extended on behalf of the unjust man (II 366d7, ff.). It follows that in a certain sense this middle section too is in four parts, because to each of the two main points has been added an element which was included in the initial premises (*to proêgoumenon*).

<IV. THE MYTH OF ER: 92.20–95.24>

<A. Outline of the myth: 92.20–93.13>

The third part of the book, as we have seen, is the myth. This has been divided into four main parts. 1. The first part (614b8–616b1) is

<sup>35</sup> Proclus' own view is that ordinary usage is not, strictly speaking, correct. The irrational parts of the soul are not themselves soul, but rather an image of soul; cf. Opsomer (2006).

concerned with the different lots in Hades of souls which are separated from the body, in which there is also discussion concerning the place of judgement and the judges themselves and the journey under the earth. 2. The second part (616b1–617d1) is about the order (*taxis*) of the cosmos, in which it is said what the arrangement (*kataskeuē*) of the heavens is, and who the divine monads are which preside over its order, and who are those who immediately move it, and who are their companions and mediating powers. 3. The third part (617d1–620d5) is about the lots and ways of life and souls' choices, in which it is said how they choose, what the daemon is, what the soul is, what the order of the lots is, what the changes [of souls] from irrational to rational animals, those from rational to irrational, from rational to rational, and from irrational to irrational animals are. 4. The fourth and final part (620d6–621b4) discusses how souls descend into bodies. And it is said in this part what the River Lethe is, what the plain of Lethe is, what the motions of the souls are that are likened to shooting stars, how they clothe themselves in bodies, what the thunder is, what the earthquake is, which phenomena he says (621b2) follow upon the falling of souls.

All of these points are necessary in order to show that justice bestows on us the greatest good things, both in the allotments after death and in the second descents into becoming.

#### <B. Symbolic interpretation: 93.13–95.29>

So the place of judgement is between earth and heaven, not because that place alone possesses judges, but because that which is in the middle is everywhere appropriate to judges, who employ the law to make the first and the last equal with one another.<sup>36</sup> Thus for instance the pentad, because it is in the middle of the ennead and the monad, is said to be sacred to justice.<sup>37</sup>

The pair of chasms which stretch into the heavens from this place and into the earth, since they lead both upward and downward, present in both directions a pair of orders, heavenly and chthonic. On the one hand they lead up into the heavens out of becoming and preside over the next becoming; on the other hand they are concerned with punishment and push under the earth those souls that are deserving of

<sup>36</sup> Cf. *Laws* 757b. Continuous geometric proportion, which Proclus identifies with the 'judgement of Zeus', preserves the same proportion between the first, middle, and last terms. Cf. in *Tim* II 198.15, ff. for the political and cosmic significance of the various kinds of proportion (which are, of course, involved in establishing a mean between extremes).

<sup>37</sup> See p. 275, n. 290 above on five as the symbol of justice.



punishment, and they separate others from those places and lead them back into becoming. Of the signs which are attached to the souls which have been judged (614c6–8), those behind represent the life which is generation-producing (*genesourgos*), and those in front the intellectual life. This is because intellection looks towards the things which are in front of it, but nature (*physis*) inclines towards the things after it and rejoices in the things behind it. 25

The Meadow (614e2) indicates the very pinnacle of becoming, into which souls flow together from above and below, on account of their choice of second births. 94

The journey of a thousand years under the earth (615a2–3) indicates the period of life under the earth, since the thousand is the cube of the decad and because of this is the symbol (*synthêma*) of chthonic life.<sup>38</sup> 5

The mouth which bellows (615e2) is the symbol of the daemonic class which separates the periods of punishment and those that are centred on the works of becoming, and which is dependent upon the lunar series (*seira*) to which bellowing is sacred.<sup>39</sup>

The light which passes through the whole revolution of the heavens (616b4–5) signifies the place itself, in which the heavens have been established, which is the first vehicle (*okhêma*) of the soul of the heavens.<sup>40</sup> 10

The one whorl and the seven whorls (616d3, ff.) signify the sphere of the fixed stars and the seven spheres [of the planets], and the hooks signify the poles, and the shaft signifies the axis [of the world] (616c6). It is for this reason that these things are made from adamant, since they are unchangeable and indivisible, but the whorls are made from other kinds [of metals] (616c7) because of the world's construction out of elements. 15

Necessity in turn (617b4) represents the one divinity which presides over fate (*heimarmenê*) and the order which steers the heavenly bodies, designating that goddess who is called Themis among the theologians.<sup>41</sup> The Fates (617b7, ff.) represent the goddesses who allocate the providence of their mother Themis: Clotho has as her lot the sphere of 20

<sup>38</sup> This interpretation is repeated below at 169.8.

<sup>39</sup> Festugière rightly refers below to 181.2: 'for the goddess (the Moon) is tauroform.' The compressed thinking here is that, since the moon has a horn shape, bellowing/lowing is sacred to it. The bellowing of the mouth in the Myth of Er is, therefore, appropriate to this class of daemones, since they depend on the series of the Moon.

<sup>40</sup> This passage seems to gesture towards Proclus' distinctive thesis that the supracrestrial light is an *immaterial body* and the place of the universe. Cf. II 198.25–9 and Simplicius in *Phys.* 612.24–613.1. See also Sorabji (1988), chap. 7 and Griffin (2012).

<sup>41</sup> Proclus discusses Necessity at greater length below (207.24–208.25). It is clearer in the longer discussion that his reference here to 'the theologians' is primarily to Hesiod, *Theogony* 901–6, where Themis is said to be the mother of the three Fates (*Moirai*).

the fixed stars, Atropos the planetary sphere, Lachesis the heavens as a whole.

The Prophet (617d2), and all of the series which follows him, manifests the angelic order which is between the divinity of the Fates and daemonic providence, the overseer of the life of souls.

25 The allotted daemon (617e1, 620d8–9) is the overseer of lives centred on the works of becoming, and he steers our whole internal constitution (*politeia*) in the realm of generation.

The lots (617d4, e6, ff.) in turn signify the cosmic order which determines for souls the types of existence which they each deserve in accordance with merit. Of this order Lachesis is the ruler, because she  
30 puts in order the entirety of the heavens. The types of existence are the forms of lives centred on the works of becoming (*genesourgōs*), which  
95 are allotted by the universe to the souls as they descend, these lives being greater or lesser in number.<sup>42</sup> The choices signify the projections of reasoning in accordance with the self-moving (*autenergētos*) power of the souls, who act in harmony with the order of the universe. The  
5 transferral into different animals, better and worse, signifies the many and varied pathways of the soul in accordance with the differing powers, rational or irrational, as like is always drawn to like in accordance with justice in the cosmos.

The field of Lethe (621a2) designates becoming as a whole, in which are the generation-producing daemones and the irrational life that is  
10 joined to souls. And the River of Lethe (621c1) designates the whole flowing course of enmattered things and ‘our roaring vessel’,<sup>43</sup> since this river eternally fills souls with forgetfulness of the rational principles which eternally stand.<sup>44</sup>

The thunder and earthquake (621b2) signify the simultaneous demiurgic activity concerning becoming, from above and below, of Zeus and Poseidon. The fall during the night (621b1) represents the allotment  
15 which leads down into the dark and lightless place. The likening of the movement of souls to shooting stars (621b4) represents the generation-producing movements of the vehicles of the soul, which for this reason are likened to shooting stars, since these vehicles have a likeness to the vehicles of the stars.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>42</sup> This does not contradict the point made earlier, that the souls themselves cannot increase or decrease in number. Rather, it seems, only so many of the total number of souls will be incarnated at a given time.

<sup>43</sup> *Chaldaean Oracles* fr.48. ‘Our roaring vessel’ is evidently the material body.

<sup>44</sup> With Festugière, we retain the MS reading, contrary to Kroll’s obelising of the first ἀεὶ (‘eternally’) in 95.11.

<sup>45</sup> The concept of the vehicle of the soul has a long history in Neoplatonism. It is basically a quasi-material body that serves to connect the immaterial soul to the material body,

Finally sleep (621b5–7) indicates the letting go and the idleness of the intellective life of the soul, which is opposite to the wakeful contemplation of the intellect.

20

Let these points suffice as seeds of the contemplations (*noêma*) contained in the myth, prepared for the use of those wishing to work them through and who are able to unravel them.<sup>46</sup>

an intermediary substance that allows the soul to travel through the cosmos to join its body. The vehicle served as the seat of imagination and was instrumental in theurgic rites, receiving imagistic messages from divinities. Porphyry had argued that the vehicle was made up of accretions that the soul acquired in its descent into generation and sloughed off again when the soul re-ascended. As such the vehicle was a temporary ethereal housing for the soul and was shed after death while the soul re-ascended through the cosmos. Iamblichus argued that the ethereal vehicle was fashioned by the Demiurge and was immortal. Proclus followed his teacher Syrianus in making the vehicle two-fold. There was a higher ethereal vehicle, fashioned by the Demiurge, that was indeed immortal, but there was also a lower mortal vehicle fashioned by the younger gods from a concatenation of the four elements. For more on Proclus' theory of the two vehicles (including the references to passages in Proclus' commentaries), see Finamore (2020). For a discussion of the role of the vehicle in Neoplatonism generally and Iamblichus especially, see Finamore (1985). The star gods, planets, and intermediary superior classes (angels, daemons, heroes) also had immortal ethereal vehicles but not the secondary mortal ones.

<sup>46</sup> It is unusual for Proclus to leave allegorical readings incomplete like this and overtly to mark them as a potential exercise for his students. He will, of course, give fuller discussions of these points in the commentary dedicated to the Myth of Er in Essay 16.

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# ENGLISH–GREEK GLOSSARY

able, to be	<i>dynasthai</i>	δύνασθαι
absurd	<i>atopos</i>	ἄτοπος
account	<i>logos</i>	λόγος
action	<i>energêma</i>	ἐνέργημα
action	<i>praxis</i>	πρᾶξις
action/deed	<i>ergon</i>	ἔργον
active	<i>energos</i>	ἐνεργός
active, to be	<i>energein</i>	ἐνεργεῖν
activity	<i>energeia</i>	ἐνέργεια
addition	<i>prosthesis</i>	πρόσθεσις
adorn, to	<i>katakosmein</i>	κατακοσμεῖν
aetherially	<i>aitheriôs</i>	αἰθερίως
affect	<i>pathos</i>	πάθος
agree to, to	<i>synchôrein</i>	συγχωρεῖν
agreement, content of	<i>homologêma</i>	ὁμολόγημα
air	<i>aêr</i>	ἄήρ
air, related to	<i>aerios</i>	ἄεριος
akin	<i>syngenês</i>	συγγενής
alien	<i>allotrios</i>	ἄλλότριος
allot, to	<i>apoklêroun</i>	ἀποκληροῦν
allot, to	<i>aponemein</i>	ἀπονέμειν
allotment	<i>apoklêrôsis</i>	ἀποκλήρωσις
allotment	<i>lêxis</i>	λήξις
allotted	<i>exairetos</i>	ἐξαίρετος
all-perfect	<i>pantelês</i>	παντελής
Amazon	<i>Amazôn</i>	Ἀμαζών
Amelius	<i>Amelios</i>	Ἀμέλιος
analogous, to be	<i>analogein</i>	ἀναλογεῖν
analogy	<i>analogia</i>	ἀναλογία
ancient	<i>palaïos</i>	παλαιός
angel	<i>angelos</i>	ἄγγελος
angelic	<i>angelikos</i>	ἁγγελικός
animal	<i>zôion</i>	ζῷον
Antarctic	<i>antarktikos</i>	ἀνταρκτικός
Anubis	<i>Anoubis</i>	Ἄνουβις
Aphrodite	<i>Aphroditê</i>	Ἀφροδίτη
apogee	<i>apogeios</i>	ἁπόγειος

Apollo	<i>Apollôn</i>	Ἀπόλλων
apparition	<i>eidôlon</i>	εἶδωλον
appear, to	<i>dokein</i>	δοκεῖν
appear, to	<i>phainein</i>	φαίνειν
appearance	<i>idea</i>	ἰδέα
appearance	<i>morphê</i>	μορφή
appetite	<i>epithymia</i>	ἐπιθυμία
appetite, to have	<i>epithymein</i>	ἐπιθυμεῖν
appetitive	<i>epithymêtikos</i>	ἐπιθυμητικός
apprehension, mode of	<i>epibolê</i>	ἐπιβολή
appropriate time	<i>kairos</i>	καιρός
appropriate to, to be	<i>prosêkein</i>	προσθῆκειν
appropriate, to be	<i>prepein</i>	πρέπειν
apt for/suitable	<i>epitêdeios</i>	ἐπιτήδειος
aptitude	<i>epitêdeiotês</i>	ἐπιτηδείότης
Ares	<i>Arês</i>	Ἄρης
Ares, pertaining to	<i>Areikos</i>	Ἄρεικός
argument	<i>logos</i>	λόγος
aristocracy	<i>aristokratia</i>	ἀριστοκρατία
Aristotle	<i>Aristotelês</i>	Ἀριστοτέλης
arithmetic	<i>arithmêtikê</i>	ἀριθμητική
arrange, to	<i>diakosmein</i>	διακοσμεῖν
arrange, to	<i>tattein</i>	τάττειν
art	<i>technê</i>	τέχνη
ascendant (i.e. zodiacal sign ascendant at birth)	<i>bôroskopos</i>	ὠρόσκοπος
ascendant, to be (astrology)	<i>bôroskopein</i>	ὠροσκοπεῖν
ascent	<i>agôgê</i>	ἀγωγή
ascent	<i>anabasis</i>	ἀνάβασις
ascent	<i>anodos</i>	ἄνοδος
aspect (astrological)	<i>schêmatismos</i>	σχηματισμός
assign, to	<i>aponemein</i>	ἀπονέμειν
assimilate, to	<i>homoioûn</i>	ὁμοιοῦν
association	<i>koinônia</i>	κοινωνία
assume in advance, to	<i>prolambanein</i>	προλαμβάνειν
Athens	<i>Athênai</i>	Ἀθῆναι
atom	<i>atomos (neuter subs)</i>	ἄτομος
Atropos	<i>Atropos</i>	Ἄτροπος
Atticus	<i>Attikos</i>	Ἀττικός
authority	<i>kratos</i>	κράτος
authority, to exercise	<i>kratein</i>	κρατεῖν
authority, to have over	<i>proïstanai</i>	προϊστάναι
auxiliaries, relating to	<i>epikourikos</i>	ἐπικουρικός
auxiliary	<i>epikouros</i>	ἐπίκουρος

axiom	<i>axiôma</i>	ἄξιωμα
bad/evil	<i>kakos</i>	κακός
balance	<i>metriotês</i>	μετριότης
balanced	<i>metrios</i>	μέτριος
barbarian	<i>barbaros</i>	βάρβαρος
beautiful	<i>kalos</i>	καλός
beautiful, most	<i>kallistos</i>	κάλλιστος
beauty	<i>kallonê</i>	καλλονή
Beauty Itself	<i>autokalos</i>	αὐτοκαλός
becoming	<i>genesis</i>	γένεσις
being	<i>on</i>	ὄν
being, beyond	<i>hyperousios</i>	ὑπερούσιος
being, lacking in	<i>anousios</i>	ἀνούσιος
belief	<i>pistis</i>	πίστις
bellow, to	<i>mykasthai</i>	μυκᾶσθαι
bellowing	<i>mykêthmos</i>	μυκηθμός
belonging to one	<i>oikeios</i>	οἰκεῖος
beneficent	<i>agathourgos</i>	ἀγαθοεργός
beneficial	<i>ôphelimos</i>	ὠφέλιμος
benefit	<i>ôpheleia</i>	ὠφέλεια
best	<i>aristos</i>	ἄριστος
birth	<i>apokyêsis</i>	ἀποκύησις
birth	<i>gennêsis</i>	γέννησις
birth	<i>spora</i>	σπορά
birth, difficulty in	<i>dysgonia</i>	δυσγονία
birth, ease of	<i>eugonia</i>	εὐγονία
birth, favourable for	<i>apokyêtikos</i>	ἀποκυητικός
blessed	<i>eudaimôn</i>	εὐδαίμων
bodiless	<i>asômatos</i>	ἄσώματος
bodily	<i>sômatikos</i>	σωματικός
body	<i>sôma</i>	σῶμα
body, related to	<i>sômatoeidês</i>	σωματοειδής
bond	<i>desmos</i>	δεσμός
boundary	<i>horos</i>	ὄρος
brain	<i>engkephalos</i>	ἐγκέφαλος
brightness	<i>phanotês</i>	φανότης
brilliant	<i>lampros</i>	λαμπρός
bring/lead forth, to	<i>proagein</i>	προάγειν
business	<i>chrêmatismos</i>	χρηματισμός
businessman	<i>chrêmatistês</i>	χρηματιστής
businessman, concerning	<i>chrêmatistikos</i>	χρηματιστικός
calculation	<i>logismos</i>	λογισμός
Cancer (sign)	<i>karkinos</i>	καρκίνος
capacity	<i>dynamis</i>	δύναμις
Capricorn	<i>aigokerôs</i>	αἰγόκερως
care	<i>epimeleia</i>	ἐπιμέλεια

cares for, one who	<i>epimelêtês</i>	ἐπιμελητής
caring	<i>therapeia</i>	θεραπεία
carry down, to	<i>hypopherein</i>	ὑποφέρειν
Carystia	<i>Karystia</i>	Καρυστία
cause	<i>aitia</i>	αἰτία
cave	<i>spêlaion</i>	σπήλαιον
celebrate/praise x as y, to	<i>hymnein</i>	ὕμνεῖν
celestial	<i>ouranios</i>	οὐράνιος
Chaldean	<i>Chaldaikos</i>	Χαλδαϊκός
chance	<i>tychê</i>	τύχη
change	<i>metabasis</i>	μετάβασις
change	<i>metabolê</i>	μεταβολή
change, to	<i>metaballein</i>	μεταβάλλειν
character	<i>charaktêr</i>	χαρακτήρ
characterise	<i>charaktêrizein</i>	χαρακτηρίζειν
characteristic	<i>idiotês</i>	ἰδιότης
chasm	<i>chasma</i>	χάσμα
choice	<i>eklogê</i>	ἐκλογή
choice	<i>hairesis</i>	αἵρεσις
choice	<i>proairesis</i>	προαίρεσις
choice, connected with	<i>proairetikos</i>	προαιρετικός
choose	<i>hairein</i>	αἵρειν
choose, to	<i>eklegein</i>	ἐκλέγειν
chthonic	<i>chthonios</i>	χθόνιος
circle	<i>kyklos</i>	κύκλος
circuit	<i>periodos</i>	περίοδος
circular	<i>kyklikos</i>	κυκλικός
circulate, to	<i>kyklizein</i>	κυκλίζειν
city	<i>polis</i>	πόλις
class	<i>genos</i>	γένος
Cleitophon	<i>Kleitophôn</i>	Κλειτοφών
Clotho	<i>Klôthô</i>	Κλωθώ
cognitive	<i>gnôstikos</i>	γνωστικός
colourless	<i>achrômatos</i>	ἄχρώματος
comedy	<i>kômôidia</i>	κωμῳδία
comes to be, what	<i>genêtos (neuter subs)</i>	γενητός
common	<i>koinos</i>	κοινός
common, to have/share in	<i>koinônein</i>	κοινωνεῖν
commonality	<i>koinônia</i>	κοινωνία
companion	<i>opados</i>	ὄπαδός
comparison	<i>parabolê</i>	παραβολή
complete	<i>pantelês</i>	παντελής
complete	<i>teleios</i>	τέλειος
complete, such as to	<i>teleiôtikos</i>	τελειωτικός
complete, to	<i>symplēroun</i>	συμπληροῦν



complete, to	<i>teleioun</i>	τελειοῦν
completely	<i>pantelôs</i>	παντελῶς
completion	<i>sympplêrôsis</i>	συμπλήρωσις
completion	<i>teleiôsis</i>	τελείωσις
completion/ completeness	<i>teleiotês</i>	τελειότης
composite	<i>synthetos</i>	σύνθετος
composition	<i>systasis</i>	σύστασις
concede a point, to	<i>synchôrein</i>	συγχωρεῖν
concept	<i>noêma</i>	νόημα
conception (mental)	<i>ennoia</i>	ἐννοία
conception (biological)	<i>spora</i>	σπορά
conception	<i>syllêpsis</i>	σύλληψις
conception, difficulty in	<i>dysgonia</i>	δυσγονία
conception, ease of	<i>eugonia</i>	εὐγονία
conception, relating to	<i>sporimos</i>	σπόριμος
conclusion	<i>symperasma</i>	συμπέρασμα
concord	<i>homonoia</i>	ὁμόνοια
concord(ance)	<i>symphônia</i>	συμφωνία
condemn, to	<i>psegein</i>	ψέγειν
condition	<i>katastasis</i>	κατάστασις
configuration	<i>schêmatismos</i>	σχηματισμός
conflict	<i>stasis</i>	στάσις
conjecture	<i>eikasia</i>	εἰκασία
conjoin, to	<i>syzeugnynai</i>	συζευγύναι
conjunction	<i>synapbê</i>	συναφή
conjunction	<i>synodos</i>	σύνοδος
consider, to	<i>skopein</i>	σκοπεῖν
consider, to	<i>theôrein</i>	θεωρεῖν
consistent	<i>symphônos</i>	σύμφωνος
constitute, to	<i>sympplêroun</i>	συμπληροῦν
constitution	<i>politeia</i>	πολιτεία
consubstantial, to render	<i>synousioun</i>	συνουσιοῦν
consummation	<i>synerxis</i>	σύνερξις
contain, to	<i>periechein</i>	περιέχειν
contemplate, to	<i>theôrein</i>	θεωρεῖν
contemplate, to	<i>theasthai</i>	θεᾶσθαι
contemplation	<i>theôria</i>	θεωρία
contingent, to be	<i>endechesthai</i>	ἐνδέχεσθαι
contingently	<i>endechomenôs</i>	ἐνδεχομένως
continuity	<i>synecheia</i>	συνέχεια
continuous	<i>synechês</i>	συνεχῆς
contradiction	<i>antilogia</i>	ἀντιλογία
contribute to, to	<i>synergein</i>	συνεργεῖν
contribute toward, to	<i>syntelein</i>	συντελεῖν
convention	<i>nomos</i>	νόμος

# English–Greek Glossary

conviction	<i>pistis</i>	πίστις
coordinate in series/ rank/level	<i>systoichos</i>	σύστοιχος
coordinate series/rank/ level	<i>systoichia</i>	συστοιχία
corollary	<i>porisma</i>	πόρισμα
correct	<i>orthos</i>	ὀρθός
correct, to	<i>epanorthoun</i>	ἐπανορθοῦν
cosmic/concerning the cosmos	<i>kosmikos</i>	κοσμικός
cosmos	<i>kosmos</i>	κόσμος
coupling	<i>synerxis</i>	σύνερξις
coupling	<i>syzeuxis</i>	σύζευξις
courage	<i>andreia</i>	ἀνδρεία
courageous	<i>andreios</i>	ἀνδρεῖος
craft	<i>technê</i>	τέχνη
craft, related to	<i>technikos</i>	τεχνικός
craft, to	<i>dêmiourgein</i>	δημιουργεῖν
craftsman	<i>tektôn</i>	τέκτων
credible	<i>pistos</i>	πιστός
criterion	<i>kritêrion</i>	κριτήριον
critical	<i>elengktikos</i>	ἐλεγκτικός
Cronius	<i>Kronios</i>	Κρόνιος
Cronos	<i>Kronos</i>	Κρόνος
cube	<i>kybos</i>	κύβος
cubic	<i>kybikos</i>	κυβικός
cultivate, to	<i>epimelein</i>	ἐπιμελεῖν
cultural training/ education	<i>mousikê</i>	μουσική
custom/what is customary	<i>ethos</i>	ἔθος
customary	<i>nomimos</i>	νόμιμος
cycle	<i>kyklos</i>	κύκλος
cycle	<i>periodos</i>	περίοδος
cycle	<i>periphora</i>	περιφορά
cycle (complete)	<i>apokatastasis</i>	ἀποκατάστασις
cyclical	<i>periodikos</i>	περιοδικός
cyclical activity	<i>kyklêsis</i>	κύκλησις
daemon	<i>daimôn</i>	δαίμων
daemon, female	<i>daimonis</i>	δαιμονίς
daemonic	<i>daimonios</i>	δαιμόνιος
dance	<i>choreia</i>	χορεία
dance, to	<i>choreuein</i>	χορεύειν
Daphne	<i>Daphnê</i>	Δάφνη
dark	<i>skoteinos</i>	σκοτεινός
death	<i>thanatos</i>	θάνατος

decision	<i>proairesis</i>	προαίρεσις
decline	<i>hyphesis</i>	ὑφesis
deficiency	<i>hyphesis</i>	ὑφesis
definable	<i>horistos</i>	ὀριστός
define	<i>diorizein</i>	διορίζειν
define, to	<i>aphorizein</i>	ἀφορίζειν
define, to	<i>horizein</i>	ὀρίζειν
definition	<i>horismos</i>	ὀρισμός
definition	<i>horos</i>	ὅρος
degree (horoscopic)	<i>moira</i>	μοίρα
Demetrius	<i>Dēmētrios</i>	Δημήτριος
demigod	<i>hēmitheos</i>	ἡμίθεος
demiurge	<i>dēmiourgos</i>	δημιουργός
demiurgic	<i>dēmiourgikos</i>	δημιουργικός
demiurgy	<i>dēmiourgia</i>	δημιουργία
demonstrate, to	<i>apodeiknyein</i>	ἀποδεικνύειν
demonstration	<i>apodeixis</i>	ἀπόδειξις
Dercyllides	<i>Derkyllidēs</i>	Δερκυλλίδης
descend, to	<i>katienai</i>	κατιέναι
descent	<i>kathodos</i>	κάθοδος
deserving	<i>axios</i>	ἄξιος
desiderative	<i>orektikos</i>	ὀρεκτικός
desire	<i>orexis</i>	ὄρεξις
desire, object of	<i>orekton</i>	ὀρεκτόν
desire, to	<i>ephisthai</i>	ἐφίσθαι
desire, to	<i>oregesthai</i>	ὀρέγεσθαι
destroy, to	<i>apollyein</i>	ἀπολλύειν
destroy, to	<i>lyein</i>	λύειν
destroy, to	<i>diaphtheirein</i>	διαφθείρειν
destroy, to	<i>phtheirein</i>	φθείρειν
destructible	<i>phthartos</i>	φθαρτός
destruction	<i>lysis</i>	λύσις
destruction	<i>phthsis</i>	φθίσις
destruction	<i>phthora</i>	φθορά
destructive	<i>phthartikos</i>	φθαρτικός
determine, to	<i>diorizein</i>	διορίζειν
determine, to	<i>horizein</i>	ὀρίζειν
dialectic	<i>dialektikos</i>	διαλεκτικός
dialectically	<i>dialektikōs</i>	διαλεκτικῶς
difference	<i>diaphora</i>	διαφορά
difference	<i>heterotēs</i>	ἐτερότης
difference, quality of	<i>diaphorotēs</i>	διαφορότης
different	<i>diaphoros</i>	διάφορος
dignified	<i>semnos</i>	σεμνός
dignity	<i>semnotēs</i>	σεμνότης
diminution	<i>hyphesis</i>	ὑφesis

diminution	<i>sterêsis</i>	στέρησις
Dionysus, of or belonging to	<i>Dionysiakos</i>	Διονυσιακός
Dioscuri	<i>Dioskouroi</i>	Δίσκουροι
Diotima	<i>Diotima</i>	Διοτίμα
discursive object	<i>dianoêma</i>	διανόημα
discursive reasoning, concerned with	<i>dianoêtikos</i>	διανοητικός
discursive thought	<i>dianoia</i>	διάνοια
discursive thought, objects of	<i>dianoêtos (neuter subs.)</i>	διανοητός
disease	<i>nosos</i>	νόσος
dishonest	<i>mochthêros</i>	μοχθηρός
disobedient, to be	<i>plêmmelein</i>	πλημμελεῖν
disposition	<i>diathesis</i>	διάθεσις
disposition	<i>hexis</i>	ἕξις
dissension	<i>stasis</i>	στάσις
dissimilar	<i>anomoios</i>	ἀνόμοιος
dissimilar, to be	<i>anomoïoun</i>	ἀνομοιοῦν
dissimilarity	<i>anomoiotês</i>	ἀνομοιότης
dissolution	<i>lysis</i>	λύσις
dissolve, to	<i>lyein</i>	λύειν
distinctive	<i>idios</i>	ἴδιος
distinguish from, to	<i>antidiairein</i>	ἀντιδιαφεῖν
distinguish, to	<i>diorizein</i>	διορίζειν
diverse	<i>poikilos</i>	ποικίλος
diversity	<i>poikilia</i>	ποικιλία
divide, to	<i>diairein</i>	διαφεῖν
divine	<i>theios</i>	θεῖος
divine in form	<i>theoeidês</i>	θεοειδής
divinely inspired, to be	<i>enthousiazerein</i>	ἐνθουσιάζειν
divinity	<i>theotês</i>	θεότης
divinity, filled with	<i>entheos</i>	ἐνθεος
divisibility	<i>merismos</i>	μερισμός
divisible	<i>meristos</i>	μεριστός
division	<i>diarexis</i>	διαίρεσις
division	<i>tmêma</i>	τμήμα
division	<i>tomê</i>	τομή
doctor	<i>iatros</i>	ἰατρός
doctrine	<i>dogma</i>	δόγμα
doctrine	<i>doxa</i>	δόξα
downward leading	<i>katagôgos</i>	καταγωγός
due proportion, with	<i>emmetrôs</i>	ἐμμέτρως
dyad	<i>dyas</i>	δυάς
dyadic	<i>dyadikos</i>	δυσαιδικός
earnest, in	<i>spoudêi</i>	σπουδῇ

earth	<i>gê</i>	γῆ
earth, concerning	<i>chthonios</i>	χθόνιος
educate, to	<i>paideuein</i>	παιδεύειν
education	<i>paideia</i>	παιδεία
education, lack of	<i>apaideusia</i>	ἀπαιδευσία
education, lack thereof	<i>amousia</i>	ἀμουσία
educative	<i>paideutikos</i>	παιδευτικός
effect/result	<i>apotelesma</i>	ἀποτέλεσμα
(astrological)		
efficacious	<i>drastêrios</i>	δραστήριος
effluence	<i>aporroia</i>	ἀπόρροια
Egypt	<i>Aigypotos</i>	Αἴγυπτος
Egyptian	<i>Aigyptios</i>	Αἰγύπτιος
Eleatic	<i>Eleatês</i>	Ἐλεάτης
<i>Eleatic Stranger</i> (Platonic dialogues)	<i>xenos</i>	ξένος
element	<i>stoicheion</i>	στοιχεῖον
elevating	<i>anagôgos</i>	ἀναγωγός
embrace, to	<i>periechein</i>	περιέχειν
emotion	<i>pathos</i>	πάθος
emotional	<i>empathês</i>	ἐμπαθής
emotional faculty	<i>pathêtikos</i>	παθητικός
Empedocles	<i>Empedoklês</i>	Ἐμπεδοκλῆς
encompass, to	<i>periechein</i>	περιέχειν
encompass, to	<i>perilambanein</i>	περιλαμβάνειν
encosmic	<i>engkosmios</i>	ἐγκόσμιος
engender, to	<i>gennan</i>	γεννᾶν
enmattered	<i>enylos</i>	ἐνυλος
ensoulment	<i>empsychia</i>	ἐμψυχία
entirely	<i>pantelôs</i>	παντελῶς
envelop, to	<i>periballein</i>	περιβάλλειν
Epicurus	<i>Epikouros</i>	Ἐπίκουρος
Epimetheus	<i>Epimêtbeus</i>	Ἐπιμηθεύς
equality	<i>isotês</i>	ἰσότης
error	<i>hamartia</i>	ἁμαρτία
error	<i>parorama</i>	παρόραμα
error	<i>parorasis</i>	παρόρασις
error, to commit an	<i>hamartanein</i>	ἁμαρτάνειν
essence	<i>ousia</i>	οὐσία
essence, same in	<i>homoousios</i>	ὁμοούσιος
essential	<i>ousiôdês</i>	οὐσιώδης
establish (a constitution)	<i>diakosmein</i>	διακοσμεῖν
establish in or among, to	<i>enidryein</i>	ἐνιδρύειν
establish, to	<i>hyphistanai</i>	ὑφίσταναι
eternal	<i>aiônios</i>	αἰώνιος
eternity	<i>aiôn</i>	αἰών

ethical	<i>êtbikos</i>	ἠθικός
ethical character	<i>êtbos</i>	ἥθος
everlasting	<i>aïdios</i>	ἄϊδιος
evidence	<i>tekmêrion</i>	τεκμήριον
evident	<i>phaneros</i>	φανερός
evident, to be	<i>phainein</i>	φαίνειν
exercise, to	<i>gymnazein</i>	γυμνάζειν
exist along with, to	<i>synphistanai</i>	συνυφιστάναι
exist, to	<i>hyparchein</i>	ὑπάρχειν
existence	<i>hyparxis</i>	ὑπαρξις
existence, such as to bring into	<i>hyparktikos</i>	ὑπαρκτικός
existent thing	<i>on</i>	ὄν
experience, to	<i>paschein</i>	πάσχειν
expressible	<i>prosêgoros</i>	προσήγορος
fact	<i>pragma</i>	πράγμα
factionalism	<i>stasis</i>	στάσις
factionous, to be	<i>stasiazein</i>	στασιάζειν
faculty	<i>dynamis</i>	δύναμις
fall/falling	<i>ptôsis</i>	πτώσεις
false	<i>pseudês</i>	ψευδής
falsely	<i>pseudôs</i>	ψευδῶς
familiar	<i>gnôrimos</i>	γνώριμος
fate	<i>beimarmenê</i>	εἰμαρμένη
Fate	<i>Moirá</i>	Μοίρα
fated	<i>beimarmenos</i>	εἰμαρμένος
Fates, concerning	<i>Moiraios</i>	Μοιραῖος
female	<i>thêlys</i>	θηλύς
feminine	<i>thêlyprepês</i>	θηλυπρεπής
feminise, to	<i>thêlynein</i>	θηλύνειν
fertile	<i>gonimos</i>	γόνιμος
fertility	<i>eugonia</i>	εὐγονία
fiction	<i>plasma</i>	πλάσμα
fictive	<i>epioplastos</i>	ἐπίπλαστος
figure	<i>schêma</i>	σχῆμα
fill up/out, to	<i>symplēroun</i>	συμπληροῦν
fill, to	<i>plêroun</i>	πληροῦν
final	<i>eschatos</i>	ἔσχατος
final	<i>teleutaios</i>	τελευταῖος
finalise, to	<i>teleutan</i>	τελευτᾶν
fine	<i>kalos</i>	καλός
finest	<i>kallistos</i>	κάλλιστος
fire	<i>pyr</i>	πῦρ
first principle	<i>archê</i>	ἀρχή
fixed (usually stars)	<i>aplanês</i>	ἀπλανής
flourishing	<i>eudaimonia</i>	εὐδαιμονία

follow, to	<i>hepesthai</i>	ἔπεσθαι
follower	<i>opados</i>	ὀπαδός
foreshadow, to	<i>prolegein</i>	προλέγειν
foretell the future, to	<i>chrêsmôidein</i>	χρησµωδεῖν
forgetfulness	<i>lêthê</i>	λήθη
form	<i>eidos</i>	εἶδος
form	<i>idea</i>	ιδέα
form	<i>morphê</i>	μορφή
form, at the level of	<i>eidêtikos</i>	ειδητικός
formative	<i>morphôtikos</i>	μορφωτικός
fortunate	<i>eutychês</i>	εὐτυχής
fortune	<i>tychê</i>	τύχη
four	<i>tetras</i>	τετράς
fraction	<i>morion</i>	μόριον
friendship	<i>philia</i>	φιλία
fulfilment	<i>apoplêrôsis</i>	ἀποπλήρωσις
function	<i>ergon</i>	ἔργον
general	<i>stratêgos</i>	στρατηγός
generally accepted	<i>endoxos</i>	ἔνδοξος
generate, to	<i>gennan</i>	γεννᾶν
generation	<i>genesis</i>	γένεσις
generation, centred on works of	<i>genesiourgos</i>	γενεσιουργός
generation-producing	<i>genesiourgos</i>	γενεσιουργός
generative	<i>gennêtikos</i>	γεννητικός
generative	<i>gonimos</i>	γόνιμος
geometry	<i>geômetria</i>	γεωμετρία
gift	<i>dosis</i>	δόσις
gifted	<i>euphyês</i>	εὐφυής
Glaucon	<i>Glaukôn</i>	Γλαύκων
goal	<i>skopos</i>	σκοπός
goal	<i>telos</i>	τέλος
god	<i>theos</i>	θεός
god, fit for	<i>theoprepês</i>	θεοπρεπής
goddess	<i>thea</i>	θεά
gold	<i>chrysos</i>	χρυσός
golden	<i>chrysous</i>	χρυσοῦς
good	<i>agathos</i>	ἀγαθός
good	<i>kalos</i>	καλός
Good Itself, the	<i>autoagathos</i>	αὐτοαγαθός
Greek	<i>Hellên</i>	Ἑλλήν
growth	<i>auxêsis</i>	αὕξησις
guardian	<i>phylax</i>	φύλαξ
guardian, female	<i>phylakis</i>	φυλακίς
guardians, concerning	<i>phylakikos</i>	φυλακικός
guarding	<i>phrouros</i>	φρουρός

Hades	<i>Haidês</i>	Ἅιδης
hand down, to	<i>paradidonai</i>	παραδιδόναι
happiness	<i>eudaimonia</i>	εὐδαιμονία
happy	<i>eudaimôn</i>	εὐδαίμων
harmful	<i>blaberos</i>	βλαβερός
harmonic	<i>harmonikos</i>	ἁρμονικός
harmonious	<i>emmelês</i>	ἔμμελής
harmonious	<i>enarmonios</i>	ἐναρμόνιος
harmonious	<i>sympbônos</i>	σύμφωνος
harmonise	<i>synarmozein</i>	συναρμόζειν
harmonise, to	<i>harmozein</i>	ἁρμόζειν
harmony	<i>harmonia</i>	ἁρμονία
harmony	<i>sympbônia</i>	συμφωνία
harmony, to be in	<i>sympbônein</i>	συμφωνεῖν
having no portion/share	<i>amoiros</i>	ἄμοιρος
healing	<i>paîônios</i>	παιώνιος
health	<i>hygeia</i>	ὕγεια
heat	<i>thermotês</i>	θερμότης
heat, to	<i>thermainein</i>	θερμαίνειν
heaven(s)	<i>ouranos</i>	οὐρανός
heavenly	<i>ouranios</i>	οὐράνιος
Helen	<i>Helenê</i>	Ἑλένη
Hermes	<i>Hermês</i>	Ἑρμῆς
hero	<i>hêrôs</i>	ἥρως
heroic	<i>hêrôikos</i>	ἥρωϊκός
Herophilus	<i>Hêrophilos</i>	Ἡρόφιλος
Hesiod	<i>Hêsiodos</i>	Ἡσίοδος
history	<i>historia</i>	ἱστορία
Homer	<i>Homêros</i>	Ὅμηρος
Homeric	<i>Homêrikos</i>	Ὅμηρικός
Homeric manner	<i>Homêrikôs</i>	Ὅμηρικῶς
honoured	<i>timios</i>	τίμιος
horoscopic, to be (i.e. to be ascendant)	<i>hôroskopein</i>	ὥροσκοπεῖν
hour	<i>hôra</i>	ᾠρα
human (adj.)	<i>antbrôpeios</i>	ἀνθρώπειος
human (adj.)	<i>antbrôpinos</i>	ἀνθρώπινος
human/man	<i>antbrôpos</i>	ἄνθρωπος
hyena	<i>hyaina</i>	ῥαινα
hymn, to	<i>hymnein</i>	ὕμνεῖν
Hypanis	<i>Hypanis</i>	Ὕπανις
hypercosmic	<i>hyperkosmios</i>	ὑπερκόσμιος
hypostasis	<i>hypostasis</i>	ὑπόστασις
hypotenuse	<i>hypoteinousê</i>	ὑποτείνουσα
hypothesis	<i>hypothesis</i>	ὑπόθεσις
ignorance	<i>agnoia</i>	ἄγνοια



ill, to be	<i>nosein</i>	νοσεῖν
illuminate, to	<i>katalampein</i>	καταλάμπειν
illuminate, to	<i>phôtizēin</i>	φωτίζειν
illumination	<i>ellampsis</i>	ἐλλαμψις
illusion	<i>phantasia</i>	φαντασία
image	<i>eidôlon</i>	εἶδωλον
image	<i>eikôn</i>	εἰκών
images, employing	<i>eikonikos</i>	εἰκονικός
imagination	<i>phantasia</i>	φαντασία
imaginative faculty	<i>phantastikon</i>	φανταστικόν
imagistically or iconically	<i>eikonikôs</i>	εἰκονικῶς
imitate, to	<i>mimeisthai</i>	μιμεῖσθαι
imitation (act)	<i>mimêsis</i>	μίμησις
imitation (object)	<i>mimêma</i>	μίμημα
imitative	<i>mimêtikos</i>	μιμητικός
imitator	<i>mimêtês</i>	μιμητῆς
immaterial	<i>ajilos</i>	ἄυλος
immobile	<i>monimos</i>	μόνιμος
immortal	<i>athanatos</i>	ἄθάνατος
immortality	<i>athanasia</i>	ἄθανασία
immovable	<i>asaleutos</i>	ἀσάλευτος
impassioned	<i>empathês</i>	ἐμπαθῆς
imperfect	<i>atelês</i>	ἄτελής
impetus, to take	<i>horman</i>	ὀρμᾶν
impious	<i>anieros</i>	ἀνίερος
impossible	<i>adynatos</i>	ἀδύνατος
impression	<i>emphasis</i>	ἐμφασις
impression	<i>typos</i>	τύπος
impulse	<i>hormê</i>	ὀρμή
impulse, relating to	<i>hormêtikos</i>	ὀρμητικός
inaccessible	<i>abatos</i>	ἄβατος
inattention	<i>parorama</i>	παρόραμα
incarnation	<i>bios</i>	βίος
include, to	<i>periechein</i>	περιέχειν
incommensurable (of magnitudes)	<i>asymmetros</i>	ἄσύμμετρος
incompatible (of astrological signs)	<i>asymmetros</i>	ἄσύμμετρος
incomplete	<i>atelês</i>	ἄτελής
incorporeal	<i>asômatos</i>	ἄσώματος
independence	<i>autopragia</i>	αὐτοπραγία
indestructible	<i>adiaphthoros</i>	ἀδιάφθορος
indestructible	<i>aphthartos</i>	ἄφθαρτος
indicate, to	<i>endeiknynai</i>	ἐνδεικνύναι
indiscipline	<i>akolasia</i>	ἀκολασία

indissoluble	<i>alytos</i>	ἄλυτος
indistinct	<i>amydros</i>	ἄμυδρός
individual	<i>idios</i>	ἴδιος
individual	<i>merikos</i>	μερικός
indivisible	<i>adiairetos</i>	ἀδιαίρετος
indivisible	<i>amerês</i>	ἀμερής
indivisible	<i>ameristos</i>	ἀμέριστος
indivisible	<i>atomos</i>	ἄτομος
induction	<i>epagôgê</i>	ἐπαγωγή
ineffable	<i>arrêtos</i>	ἄρρητος
inequality	<i>anisotês</i>	ἀνισότης
infer, to	<i>sylogizesthai</i>	συλλογίζεσθαι
inferior	<i>hypbeimenos</i>	ὕφειμένος
inferior	<i>katadeesteros</i>	καταδεέστερος
inferiority	<i>hypbêsis</i>	ὑφesis
infertility	<i>dysgonia</i>	δυσγονία
infinity	<i>apeiria</i>	ἄπειρία
injustice	<i>adikia</i>	ἀδικία
innate	<i>symphytos</i>	σύμφυτος
inquire, to	<i>zêtein</i>	ζητεῖν
inquiry	<i>historia</i>	ἵστορία
inquiry	<i>skemma</i>	σκέμμα
inquiry	<i>zêtêsis</i>	ζήτησις
inseparable	<i>achôristos</i>	ἀχώριστος
instrument	<i>organon</i>	ὄργανον
insult, to	<i>hybrizein</i>	ὕβριζειν
intellect	<i>nous</i>	νοῦς
intellect, lacking in	<i>anoêtos</i>	ἀνόητος
intellect, lacking in	<i>anous</i>	ἄνους
intellection	<i>noêsis</i>	νόησις
intellective	<i>noêtikos</i>	νοητικός
intellectual/intellective	<i>noeros</i>	νοερός
intelligence	<i>phronêsis</i>	φρόνησις
intelligence, endowed with	<i>emphrôn</i>	ἐμφρων
intelligent	<i>sophos</i>	σοφός
intelligent, to be	<i>phronein</i>	φρονεῖν
intelligible	<i>noêtos</i>	νοητός
intelligise, to	<i>noein</i>	νοεῖν
intense	<i>syntonos</i>	σύντονος
intention	<i>boulêsis</i>	βούλησις
intercourse	<i>synousia</i>	συνουσία
intermediary	<i>mesotês</i>	μεσότης
intermediate	<i>mesos</i>	μέσος
interpret, to	<i>exêgeisthai</i>	ἐξηγεῖσθαι
interpretation	<i>exêgêsis</i>	ἐξηγησις

interpretation	<i>hyponoia</i>	ὑπόνοια
interval	<i>diastêma</i>	διάστημα
interweave, to	<i>symplekein</i>	συμπλέκειν
introduce, to	<i>epagein</i>	ἐπάγειν
introduction	<i>prooimion</i>	προοίμιον
investigate, to	<i>skopein</i>	σκοπεῖν
invisible	<i>aoratos</i>	ἀόρατος
invisible	<i>aphanês</i>	ἀφανής
irrational	<i>alogos</i>	ἄλογος
journey	<i>poreia</i>	πορεία
judge	<i>dikastês</i>	δικαστής
judge	<i>kritês</i>	κριτής
judge, to	<i>krinein</i>	κρίνειν
judgement	<i>katalêpsis</i>	κατάληψις
judgement	<i>krisis</i>	κρίσις
judging, means of	<i>kritêrion</i>	κριτήριον
just	<i>dikaios</i>	δίκαιος
justice	<i>dikaïosynê</i>	δικαιοσύνη
justice	<i>dikê</i>	δίκη
Justice Itself	<i>autodikaïos</i>	αὐτοδίκαιος
keep company with, to	<i>syneinai</i>	συνεῖναι
kind	<i>eidos</i>	εἶδος
kind	<i>genos</i>	γένος
king	<i>basileus</i>	βασιλεύς
king, to rule as	<i>basileuein</i>	βασιλεύειν
kinship	<i>oikeiôtês</i>	οἰκειότης
kinship	<i>syngeneia</i>	συγγένεια
known	<i>gnôrimos</i>	γνώριμος
Kore	<i>Korê</i>	Κόρη
labourer, to be a	<i>thêteuein</i>	θητεύειν
labourers, relating to	<i>thêtikos</i>	θητικός
Lachesis	<i>Lachesis</i>	Λάχεσις
lack	<i>sterêsis</i>	στέρησις
last	<i>eschatos</i>	ἔσχατος
later-born	<i>hysterogenês</i>	ὑστερογενής
law	<i>nomos</i>	νόμος
<i>Laws</i> (Platonic dialogue)	<i>Nomoi</i>	Νόμοι
lead upwards/back (vb)	<i>anagein</i>	ἀνάγειν
lead, to	<i>periagein</i>	περιάγειν
leader	<i>hêgemôn</i>	ἡγεμών
leader, to be a	<i>proêgeisthai</i>	προηγείσθαι
learn, to	<i>manthanein</i>	μανθάνειν
learning	<i>mathêsis</i>	μάθησις
learning, object of	<i>mathêma</i>	μάθημα
legislate, to	<i>nomothetein</i>	νομοθετεῖν
legislative	<i>nomothetikos</i>	νομοθετικός

legislator	<i>nomothetês</i>	νομοθέτης
leisure	<i>scholê</i>	σχολή
Lethe	<i>Lêthê</i>	Λήθη
level	<i>platos</i>	πλάτος
liberated	<i>apolytos</i>	ἀπόλυτος
life	<i>zôê</i>	ζωή
life, way of	<i>bios</i>	βίος
life-bringing	<i>zôtikos</i>	ζωτικός
lifecycle	<i>peritropê</i>	περιτροπή
life-engendering	<i>zôioyonikos</i>	ζωογονικός
lifeless	<i>appsychos</i>	ἄψυχος
lifetime	<i>bios</i>	βίος
light	<i>phôs</i>	φῶς
likemindedness	<i>homonoia</i>	ὁμόνοια
liken to	<i>apeikazein</i>	ἀπεικάζειν
liken to	<i>homoion</i>	ὁμοιοῦν
likeness	<i>apeikasia</i>	ἀπεικασία
likeness	<i>homoiôma</i>	ὁμοίωμα
likeness	<i>homoiotês</i>	ὁμοιότης
limit	<i>boros</i>	ὄρος
limit	<i>peras</i>	πέρας
live, to	<i>zên</i>	ζῆν
living creature	<i>zôion</i>	ζῶον
lord	<i>kyrios</i>	κύριος
lot	<i>lêxis</i>	λήξις
lot/what one is allotted	<i>klêros</i>	κληῖρος
love of Becoming	<i>philogenesis</i>	φιλογένεσις
love of honour	<i>philotimia</i>	φιλοτιμία
love, to	<i>eran</i>	ἐράν
loving beauty	<i>philokalos</i>	φιλόκαλος
loving honour	<i>philotimos</i>	φιλότιμος
loving money	<i>philochrêmatos</i>	φιλοχρήματος
loving of the body	<i>philosômatos</i>	φιλοσώματος
low/base	<i>phaulos</i>	φαῦλος
lowest	<i>eschatos</i>	ἔσχατος
Lusitanian	<i>Lysitanos</i>	Λυσιτανός
Magnus	<i>Magnos</i>	Μάγνος
maintain, to	<i>sôzein</i>	σώζειν
maker	<i>poiêtês</i>	ποιητής
male	<i>arrên</i>	ἄρρην
male–female	<i>arrenothêlys</i>	ἄρρενόθηλυσ
malefic (astrology)	<i>kakopoios</i>	κακοποιός
manufactured	<i>technêtos</i>	τεχνητός
many-headed ( <i>Rep.</i> 588c7)	<i>polykephalos</i>	πολυκέφαλος
marriage	<i>gamos</i>	γάμος

married	<i>syzygos</i>	σύζυγος
marry, to	<i>syzygein</i>	συζυγεῖν
masculine	<i>arrenôpos</i>	ἄρρενωπός
masculine, to render	<i>arreneisthai</i>	ἄρρενεῖσθαι
master	<i>despotês</i>	δεσπότης
material	<i>hylikos</i>	ύλικός
material	<i>sômatikos</i>	σωματικός
mating	<i>synerxis</i>	σύνεργις
matter	<i>hylê</i>	ύλη
meadow	<i>leimôn</i>	λειμών
mean	<i>mesos</i>	μέσος
measure	<i>metron</i>	μέτρον
measure, to	<i>metrein</i>	μετρεῖν
medical art	<i>iatrikê</i>	ιατρική
Medius	<i>Mêdios</i>	Μήδιος
memory, concerning	<i>mnênoneutikos</i>	μνημονευτικός
Meno	<i>Menôn</i>	Μένων
menstrual flow	<i>katharsis</i>	κάθαρσις
menstruate	<i>kathairein (middle)</i>	καθαίρειν
mention	<i>mnêmê</i>	μνήμη
method	<i>metbodos</i>	μέθοδος
middle	<i>mesos</i>	μέσος
mimetic	<i>mimêtikos</i>	μιμητικός
mixed	<i>miktos</i>	μικτός
mixed	<i>symmigês</i>	συμμιγής
mixture	<i>krasis</i>	κράσις
mixture	<i>mixis</i>	μίξις
mixture	<i>symmixis</i>	σύμμιξις
model upon, to	<i>apeikazein</i>	ἀπεικάζειν
moderate	<i>sôphrôn</i>	σώφρων
moderate, to	<i>metrein</i>	μετρεῖν
moderate, to be	<i>sôphronein</i>	σωφρονεῖν
moderation	<i>sôphrosynê</i>	σωφροσύνη
monad	<i>monas</i>	μονάς
monadic manner, in a	<i>monadikôs</i>	μοναδικῶς
money	<i>chrêma</i>	χρῆμα
monstrous	<i>teratôdês</i>	τερατώδης
moon	<i>selênê</i>	σελήνη
moon, below the	<i>hyposelênos</i>	ὑποσέληνος
moon, new	<i>synodos</i>	σύνοδος
moon, phase of	<i>schêmatismos</i>	σχηματισμός
mortal	<i>thnêtos</i>	θνητός
mortal in form	<i>thnêtoeidês</i>	θνητοειδής
mother	<i>mêtêr</i>	μήτηρ
motion	<i>kinêsis</i>	κίνησις
motion	<i>phora</i>	φορά

motion, in eternal	<i>aeikinêtos</i>	ἀεικίνητος
motion, relating to	<i>kinêtikos</i>	κινητικός
mouth	<i>stomion</i>	στόμιον
move around in a circle, to	<i>periagein</i>	περιάγειν
move, to	<i>kinēin</i>	κινεῖν
moveable	<i>kinêtos</i>	κινητός
moved by another	<i>beterokinêtos</i>	έτεροκίνητος
movement	<i>kinêma</i>	κίνημα
multiplicity/multitude	<i>plêthos</i>	πλῆθος
multi-form	<i>polyeidês</i>	πολυειδής
Muse	<i>Mousa</i>	Μοῦσα
Muses, art of	<i>mousikê</i>	μουσική
Muses, leader of (sc. Apollo)	<i>mousêgetês</i>	μουσηγέτης
musicality, lack thereof	<i>amousia</i>	ἄμουσία
mystical	<i>mystikos</i>	μυστικός
myth	<i>mythos</i>	μῦθος
name	<i>onoma</i>	ὄνομα
name or call, to	<i>onomazein</i>	ὀνομάζειν
narrative	<i>historia</i>	ἱστορία
nation	<i>ethnos</i>	ἔθνος
nativity (astrology)	<i>genesis</i>	γένεσις
natural/concerning nature	<i>physikos</i>	φυσικός
natural ability, lack of	<i>aphyia</i>	ἄφυια
natural ability, lacking in	<i>aphyês</i>	ἄφυής
naturally suited	<i>euphyês</i>	εὐφυής
nature	<i>eidos</i>	εἶδος
nature	<i>physis</i>	φύσις
necessary	<i>anangkê</i>	ἀνάγκη
necessary	<i>anangkaios</i>	ἀναγκαῖος
necessities	<i>anangkaia (neuter pl)</i>	ἀναγκαῖα
Nestorius	<i>Nestorios</i>	Νεστόριος
newly initiated	<i>neotelês</i>	νεοτελής
Nikolaus	<i>Nikolaos</i>	Νικόλαος
non-being	<i>to mê on</i>	τὸ μὴ ὄν
non-relation	<i>aschetos</i>	ἄσχετος
nourish, to	<i>trephein</i>	τρέφειν
number	<i>arithmos</i>	ἄριθμός
Number Itself	<i>autoarithmos</i>	αὐτοαριθμός
number, base or original	<i>archê</i>	ἀρχή
number, even	<i>artios</i>	ἄρτιος
number, irrational	<i>arrên</i>	ἄρρην
number, odd	<i>perittos</i>	περιττός
number, square or root	<i>dynamis</i>	δύναμις

# English–Greek Glossary

number, sum of consecutive integers	<i>embadon</i>	ἐμβადόν
number, to	<i>arithmein</i>	ἀριθμεῖν
number, to be a square of	<i>dynasteuein</i>	δυναστεύειν
numbers, rational	<i>rêtos</i>	ῥητός
objective	<i>skopos</i>	σκοπός
oblivion	<i>lêthê</i>	λήθη
observation	<i>katanoôsis</i>	κατανόησις
occupation / pursuit	<i>epitêdeuma</i>	ἐπιτήδευμα
occupation / pursuit, to have	<i>epitêdeuein</i>	ἐπιτηδεύειν
Odysseus	<i>Odysseus</i>	Ὀδυσσεύς
offspring	<i>ekgonos</i>	ἐκγονος
offspring	<i>gennêma</i>	γέννημα
one	<i>hen</i>	ἐν
One, the	<i>hen</i>	ἐν
one's own	<i>oikeios</i>	οἰκεῖος
opine, to	<i>doxazein</i>	δοξάζειν
opinion	<i>doxa</i>	δόξα
opinion, object of	<i>doxaston</i>	δοξαστόν
opinionative	<i>doxastikos</i>	δοξαστικός
opportune moment	<i>kairos</i>	καιρός
orator	<i>rhêtôr</i>	ῥήτωρ
order	<i>diakosmos</i>	διάκοσμος
order	<i>taxis</i>	τάξις
order, to	<i>diakosmein</i>	διακοσμεῖν
order, to	<i>tattein</i>	τάττειν
order, to put in	<i>kosmein</i>	κοσμεῖν
orderly	<i>eutaktos</i>	εὐτακτός
organ	<i>organon</i>	ὄργανον
organise, to	<i>tattein</i>	τάττειν
Orpheus	<i>Orpheus</i>	Ὀρφεύς
Osiris	<i>Osiris</i>	Ὅσιρις
overseer	<i>ephoros</i>	ἐφορος
pain	<i>lypê</i>	λύπη
pairing	<i>syzeuxis</i>	σύζευξις
paradigm	<i>paradeigma</i>	παράδειγμα
Parmenides	<i>Parmenidês</i>	Παρμενίδης
part	<i>meros</i>	μέρος
part	<i>morion</i>	μόριον
partial	<i>merikos</i>	μερικός
participate, to	<i>metechtein</i>	μετέχειν
participated	<i>methektos</i>	μεθεκτός
participates, that which	<i>metochos</i>	μέτοχος
participation	<i>metousia</i>	μετουσία

particular	<i>merikos</i>	μερικός
partless	<i>amerês</i>	ἀμερής
passion	<i>pathos</i>	πάθος
passive	<i>pathêtikos</i>	παθητικός
Paterius	<i>Paterios</i>	Πατέριος
path	<i>periagôgê</i>	περιαγωγή
pathway	<i>diexodos</i>	διέξοδος
perceive, to	<i>aisthanesthai</i>	αἰσθάνεσθαι
perceptible	<i>aisthêtos</i>	αἰσθητός
perception	<i>aisthêsis</i>	αἴσθησις
perceptive	<i>aisthêtikos</i>	αἰσθητικός
perfect	<i>teleios</i>	τέλειος
perfect, to	<i>telein</i>	τελεῖν
perfect, to	<i>teleioun</i>	τελειοῦν
perfection	<i>teleiôsis</i>	τελειώσις
perfection	<i>teleiotês</i>	τελειότης
perfection, productive of	<i>telesiourgos</i>	τελεσιουργός
perfective	<i>teleiôtikos</i>	τελειωτικός
perigee	<i>perigeios</i>	περίγειος
perimeter	<i>periphoreia</i>	περιφέρεια
period	<i>periodos</i>	περίοδος
period	<i>periphora</i>	περιφορά
perish, to	<i>apollyein (passive)</i>	ἀπολλύειν
perishable	<i>phthartos</i>	φθαρτός
perishing	<i>phthora</i>	φθορά
persuade, to	<i>peithein</i>	πείθειν
pertain to, to	<i>prosêkein</i>	προσθήκειν
Petosiris	<i>Petoseiris</i>	Πετόσειρις
<i>Phaedo</i> (dialogue)	<i>Phaidôn</i>	Φαίδων
<i>Phaedrus</i> (dialogue)	<i>Phaidros</i>	Φαῖδρος
Phanes	<i>Phanês</i>	Φάνης
<i>Philebus</i> (dialogue)	<i>Philêbos</i>	Φίληβος
philosopher	<i>philosophos</i>	φιλόσοφος
philosophise, to	<i>philosophhein</i>	φιλοσοφεῖν
Phoenicians	<i>Phoinikes</i>	Φοίνικες
physical training	<i>gymnastikê</i>	γυμναστική
physical training, to undergo	<i>gymnazein</i>	γυμνάζειν
place	<i>topos</i>	τόπος
plane	<i>epipedon</i>	ἐπίπεδον
planet	<i>planês</i>	πλάνης
Plato	<i>Platôn</i>	Πλάτων
Platonic	<i>Platônikos</i>	Πλατωνικός
plausible	<i>pistos</i>	πιστός
play	<i>paidia</i>	παιδιά
pleasure	<i>bêdonê</i>	ἡδονή



pleasure-loving	<i>philêdonos</i>	φιλήδονος
Plotinus	<i>Plôtinos</i>	Πλωτῖνος
pluralise, to	<i>plêthyein</i>	πληθεύειν
plurality	<i>plêthos</i>	πλήθος
Plutarch	<i>Ploutarchos</i>	Πλούταρχος
poet	<i>poiêtês</i>	ποιητής
poetic	<i>poiêtikos</i>	ποιητικός
pole	<i>polos</i>	πόλος
<i>polis</i>	<i>polis</i>	πόλις
political	<i>politikos</i>	πολιτικός
political arrangement	<i>politeia</i>	πολιτεία
Porphry	<i>Porphyrios</i>	Πορφύριος
portion	<i>moira</i>	μοίρα
Poseidon	<i>Poseidôn</i>	Ποσειδῶν
position	<i>thesis</i>	θέσις
possession	<i>ktêsis</i>	κτησις
possessions	<i>chrêma</i>	χρήμα
power	<i>dynamis</i>	δύναμις
power, to fall under	<i>dynasteuein</i>	δυναστεύειν
practical	<i>praktikos</i>	πρακτικός
prayer	<i>euchê</i>	εὐχή
precaution	<i>eulabeia</i>	εὐλάβεια
precaution, to take	<i>eulabeisthai</i>	εὐλαβεῖσθαι
predict, to	<i>prolegein</i>	προλέγειν
pre-exist, to	<i>proÿparchein</i>	προϋπάρχειν
pregnancy	<i>gennêsis</i>	γέννησις
premise	<i>protasis</i>	πρότασις
premonition, to have	<i>apomanteuesthai</i>	ἀπομαντεύεσθαι
prepare, to	<i>paraskeuazein</i>	παρασκευάζειν
preservation	<i>sôtêria</i>	σωτηρία
preserve, to	<i>phylattein</i>	φυλάττειν
preserve, to	<i>sôzein</i>	σώζειν
preserving	<i>sôstikos</i>	σωστικός
preside over, to	<i>proïstanai</i>	προϊστάναι
prevent, to	<i>kôlyein</i>	κωλύειν
primarily	<i>proêgoumenôs</i>	προηγουμένως
primarily effective	<i>prôtourgos</i>	πρωτουργός
primary, to be	<i>proêgeisthai</i>	προηγείσθαι
primordial	<i>prôtourgos</i>	πρωτουργός
probable	<i>eikotologikos</i>	εἰκοτολογικός
problem, to raise	<i>aporein</i>	ἀπορεῖν
proceed, to	<i>proerchesthai</i>	προέρχεσθαι
proceed, to	<i>proienai</i>	προιέναι
procession	<i>proodos</i>	πρόσδος
procreate, to	<i>gennan</i>	γεννᾶν
procreation	<i>genesis</i>	γένεσις

procreation	<i>poiësis</i>	ποίησις
produce, to	<i>paragein</i>	παράγειν
produce, to	<i>parechein</i>	παρέχειν
production	<i>poiësis</i>	ποίησις
productive	<i>poiêtikos</i>	ποιητικός
project, to	<i>proballein</i>	προβάλλειν
projection	<i>probolê</i>	προβολή
Prometheus	<i>Promêtheus</i>	Προμηθεύς
property	<i>idiotês</i>	ιδιότης
property	<i>poiotês</i>	ποιότης
prophecy, to	<i>apomanteuesthai</i>	ἀπομαντεύεσθαι
prophecy, to	<i>chrêmôidein</i>	χρησμοδεῖν
prophet	<i>mantikos</i>	μαντικός
prophet	<i>prophêtês</i>	προφήτης
prophet (female)	<i>prophêtis</i>	προφήτις
prophetic	<i>mantôios</i>	μαντώος
prophetic art	<i>mantikê</i>	μαντική
proportion	<i>logos</i>	λόγος
proportionality	<i>analogia</i>	ἀναλογία
proposition	<i>thesis</i>	θέσις
Protagoras	<i>Prôtagoras</i>	Πρωταγόρας
protect, to	<i>phylattein</i>	φυλάττειν
protecting	<i>phrouros</i>	φρουρός
protective	<i>phourêtikos</i>	φρουρητικός
provide, to	<i>paraskeuazein</i>	παρασκευάζειν
provide, to	<i>parechein</i>	παρέχειν
providence	<i>pronoia</i>	πρόνοια
providential	<i>pronoêtikos</i>	προνοητικός
proximate	<i>prosechês</i>	προσεχής
psychic	<i>psychikos</i>	ψυχικός
psychic vehicle	<i>ochêma</i>	ὄχημα
Ptolemy	<i>Ptolemaios</i>	Πτολεμαῖος
punish, to	<i>kolazein</i>	κολάζειν
punishment	<i>tisis</i>	τίσις
pure	<i>achrantos</i>	ἄχραντος
pure	<i>akêratos</i>	ἀκήρατος
pure	<i>katharos</i>	καθάρως
purify, to	<i>kathairein</i>	καθαίρειν
purify, to	<i>kathareuein</i>	καθαρεύειν
put forth, to	<i>proteinein</i>	προτείνειν
puzzled, to be	<i>aporein</i>	ἀπορεῖν
Pythagoras	<i>Pythagoras</i>	Πυθαγόρας
Pythagorean	<i>Pythagoreios</i>	Πυθαγόρειος
quality	<i>poiotês</i>	ποιότης
quantity	<i>plêthos</i>	πλῆθος
rank together with, to	<i>syntattein</i>	συντάττειν

ratio	<i>logos</i>	λόγος
ratio of 3:2	<i>bêmiolios</i>	ἡμιόλιος
ratio of 4:3	<i>epitritos</i>	ἐπίτριτος
ratio of 9:8	<i>epogdoos</i>	ἐπόγδοος
rational	<i>logikos</i>	λογικός
ray (of the soul, <i>Rep.</i> III 540a7)	<i>augê</i>	αὐγή
reason syllogistically, to	<i>syllogizesthai</i>	συλλογίζεσθαι
reasoning	<i>logismos</i>	λογισμός
receive, to	<i>hypodechesthai</i>	ὑποδέχεσθαι
receptacle	<i>hypodochê</i>	ὑποδοχή
receptive	<i>dektikos</i>	δεκτικός
receptive	<i>epitêdeios</i>	ἐπιτήδειος
recollection	<i>anamnêsis</i>	ἀνάμνησις
recur, to	<i>anakyklein</i>	ἀνακυκλεῖν
reflection	<i>emphasis</i>	ἐμφασις
refute, to	<i>elenchein</i>	ἐλέγχειν
relation	<i>schesis</i>	σχέσις
relational	<i>schetikos</i>	σχετικός
relational manner, in a	<i>schetikôs</i>	σχετικῶς
remember, to	<i>mnêmonuein</i>	μνημονεύειν
remind, to	<i>hypomimnêskhein</i>	ὑπομιμνήσκειν
represent, to	<i>eneikonizesthai</i>	ἐνεικονίζεσθαι
reproduction	<i>apogennêsis</i>	ἀπογέννησις
<i>Republic</i> (dialogue)	<i>Politeia</i>	Πολιτεία
reputable	<i>endoxos</i>	ἐνδοξος
resemblance	<i>homoîōma</i>	ὁμοίωμα
resistant	<i>antitypos</i>	ἀντίτυπος
resolve	<i>lyein</i>	λύειν
responsible	<i>aitios</i>	αἵτιος
retrogradation (of planets)	<i>aphairesis</i>	ἀφαίρεσις
return	<i>apokatastasis</i>	ἀποκατάστασις
return / restore to starting point, to	<i>apokathistanai</i>	ἀποκαθιστάναι
reveal, to	<i>ekphainein</i>	ἐκφαίνειν
reveal, to	<i>emphanizein</i>	ἐμφανίζειν
revelatory	<i>ekphantikos</i>	ἐκφαντικός
reversion	<i>epistrophê</i>	ἐπιστροφή
reversion, bringing about	<i>epistreptikos</i>	ἐπιστρεπτικός
revolution	<i>periphora</i>	περιφορά
revolve, to	<i>kyklizein</i>	κυκλίζειν
rhetorician	<i>rhêtôr</i>	ρήτωρ
rhythm	<i>rhythmos</i>	ῥυθμός

right, of a triangle or angle	<i>orthos</i>	ὀρθός
ritual, concerning	<i>telestikos</i>	τελεστικός
river	<i>potamos</i>	ποταμός
roll up, to	<i>synelissein</i>	συνελίσσειν
rotation	<i>kyklêsis</i>	κύκλησις
royal	<i>basileios</i>	βασιλείος
rule	<i>archê</i>	ἀρχή
rule	<i>kanôn</i>	κανών
rule, to	<i>archein</i>	ἄρχειν
rule, to	<i>kratein</i>	κρατεῖν
ruler	<i>archôn</i>	ἄρχων
ruler	<i>hêgemôn</i>	ἡγεμών
ruler, to be a	<i>archein</i>	ἄρχειν
rules	<i>dogma</i>	δόγμα
ruling faculty	<i>hêgemonikon</i>	ἡγεμονικόν
ruling, that which concerns	<i>archikos</i>	ἀρχικός
sacred	<i>hieros</i>	ἱερός
sacred rite	<i>hierourgia</i>	ἱεουργία
sacrificial animals, inspection of	<i>hieroskopia</i>	ἱεροσκοπία
salvation	<i>sôtêria</i>	σωτηρία
sameness	<i>tautotês</i>	ταυτότης
sanctified	<i>hieratikos</i>	ἱερατικός
Sarmatian	<i>Sauromatis</i>	Σαυρομάτις
saviour	<i>sôtêr</i>	σωτήρ
science/scientific knowledge	<i>epistêmê</i>	ἐπιστήμη
scientific knowledge, object of	<i>epistêtos</i>	ἐπιστητός
scientific knowledge, of or for	<i>epistêmonikos</i>	ἐπιστημονικός
sculpture	<i>agalma</i>	ἄγαλμα
season	<i>bôra</i>	ῶρα
Seasons (divinities)	<i>Hôrai</i>	῾Ωραι
secondarily/in a secondary manner	<i>deuterôs</i>	δευτέρως
secret	<i>aporhêtos</i>	ἀπόρρητος
see, to	<i>theasthai</i>	θεᾶσθαι
seed	<i>sperma</i>	σπέρμα
seek, to	<i>zêtein</i>	ζητεῖν
seem, to	<i>dokein</i>	δοκεῖν
self-constituted	<i>authypostatos</i>	αὐθυπόστατος
self-control	<i>sôphrosynê</i>	σωφροσύνη
self-controlled	<i>sôphrôn</i>	σώφρων

self-controlled, to be	<i>sôphronein</i>	σωφρονεῖν
self-evidence	<i>enargeia</i>	ἐνάργεια
self-motion	<i>autokinêsia</i>	αὐτοκινησία
self-moving	<i>autokinêtos</i>	αὐτοκίνητος
self-moving	<i>autenergêtos</i>	αὐτενεργητος
self-nourishing	<i>autophyês</i>	αὐτοφυής
separable	<i>chôristos</i>	χωριστός
separate	<i>chôristos</i>	χωριστός
separate from, to be	<i>chôrizein</i>	χωρίζειν
separation	<i>chôrismos</i>	χωρισμός
separation	<i>diastasis</i>	διάστασις
series	<i>seira</i>	σειρά
serious	<i>spoudaios</i>	σπουδαῖος
sex	<i>genos</i>	γένος
shadow	<i>skia</i>	σκιά
shameful	<i>aischros</i>	αἰσχρός
shape	<i>schêma</i>	σχῆμα
shape, to	<i>plattein</i>	πλάττειν
share in, to	<i>metechtein</i>	μετέχειν
shares in, that which	<i>metochos</i>	μέτοχος
show, to	<i>deiknynai</i>	δεικνύειν
show, to	<i>epideiknynai</i>	ἐπιδεικνύναι
sign	<i>sêmeion</i>	σημεῖον
signify, to	<i>sêmainein</i>	σημαίνειν
similar, to make	<i>homoïoun</i>	ὁμοιοῦν
similarity	<i>homoiotês</i>	ὁμοιότης
Simmias	<i>Simmias</i>	Σιμίας
simple	<i>haplous</i>	ἀπλοῦς
simpliciter / simply	<i>haplôs</i>	ἀπλῶς
simplicity	<i>haplotês</i>	ἀπλότης
Siren	<i>Seirên</i>	Σειρήν
slackening	<i>hyphesis</i>	ὑφesis
sleep	<i>hypnos</i>	ὕπνος
Slowness Itself	<i>autobradytês</i>	αὐτοβραδύτης
Socrates	<i>Sôkratês</i>	Σωκράτης
Socratic	<i>Sôkratikos</i>	Σωκρατικός
soldier	<i>stratiôtês</i>	στρατιώτης
solid	<i>stereos</i>	στερεός
sophist	<i>sophistês</i>	σοφιστής
<i>Sophist</i> (dialogue)	<i>Sophistês</i>	Σοφιστής
Sosigenes	<i>Sôsigenês</i>	Σωσιγένης
soul	<i>psychê</i>	ψυχή
soul, lacking in	<i>appsychos</i>	ἄψυχος
soul, of or relating to	<i>psychikos</i>	ψυχικός
source	<i>pêgê</i>	πηγή
sovereign	<i>kyrios</i>	κύριος

Spartan	<i>Lakedaimôn</i>	Λακεδαιμόνων
specific	<i>merikos</i>	μερικός
speech	<i>logos</i>	λόγος
sperm	<i>sperma</i>	σπέρμα
sphere	<i>kyklos</i>	κύκλος
sphere	<i>sphaira</i>	σφαῖρα
spirit, relating to	<i>thymikos</i>	θυμικός
spirited	<i>thymoeidês</i>	θυμοειδής
spirited part of soul	<i>thymos</i>	θυμός
stable	<i>monimos</i>	μόνιμος
star	<i>astêr</i>	ἀστήρ
star	<i>astron</i>	ἄστρον
state (political)	<i>politeia</i>	πολιτεία
statesman	<i>politikos</i>	πολιτικός
<i>Statesman</i> (dialogue)	<i>Politikos</i>	Πολιτικός
status	<i>taxis</i>	τάξις
steer, to	<i>kybernan</i>	κυβερνᾶν
steersman/ship's captain	<i>kybernêtês</i>	κυβερνήτης
strictly/in a strict sense	<i>kyriôs</i>	κυρίως
structure	<i>systasis</i>	σύστασις
structured	<i>systatos</i>	συστατός
study, object of	<i>mathêma</i>	μάθημα
style, rhetorical	<i>idea</i>	ἰδέα
sub-celestial	<i>hypouranios</i>	ὑπουράνιος
subject matter	<i>pragma</i>	πρᾶγμα
sub-lunary	<i>hyposelênos</i>	ὑποσέληνος
substance	<i>ousia</i>	οὐσία
substance, productive of	<i>ousiopoios</i>	οὐσιοποιός
substantial	<i>ousiôdês</i>	οὐσιώδης
substantialise, to	<i>ousioun</i>	οὐσιοῦν
subtraction	<i>aphairesis</i>	ἀφαίρεσις
successive	<i>synechês</i>	συνεχής
suffer, to	<i>paschein</i>	πάσχειν
sun	<i>bêlios</i>	ἥλιος
sun, of or related to	<i>bêliakos</i>	ἡλιακός
sunrise	<i>anatolê</i>	ἀνατολή
superessential	<i>hyperousios</i>	ὑπερούσιος
superiority	<i>hyperochê</i>	ὑπεροχή
surface area	<i>embadon</i>	ἐμβαδόν
surprising	<i>thaumastos</i>	θαυμαστός
sustain, to	<i>synechein</i>	συνέχειν
syllable	<i>syllabê</i>	συλλαβή
syllogism	<i>syllogismos</i>	συλλογισμός
symbol	<i>symbolon</i>	σύμβολον
symbol	<i>synthêma</i>	σύνθημα
symbolically	<i>symbolikôs</i>	συμβολικῶς

symmetry	<i>symmetria</i>	συμμετρία
symmetry, lacking in	<i>asymmetros</i>	ἄσύμμετρος
sympathy	<i>sympatheia</i>	συμπάθεια
teach, to	<i>didaskein</i>	διδάσκειν
teach, to	<i>paradidonai</i>	παραδιδόναι
teacher	<i>didaskalos</i>	διδάσκαλος
teacher	<i>kathêgēmôn</i>	καθηγέμων
temporal	<i>chronikos</i>	χρονικός
term	<i>horos</i>	ὅρος
tetrad	<i>tetras</i>	τετράς
Theaetetus	<i>Theaitêtos</i>	Θεαίτητος
Theano	<i>Theanô</i>	Θεανώ
Themis	<i>Themis</i>	Θέμις
Theodore of Asine	<i>Theodôros</i>	Θεόδωρος
theologian	<i>theologos</i>	θεολόγος
theological	<i>theologikos</i>	θεολογικός
theorem	<i>theôrêma</i>	θεώρημα
theory	<i>theôria</i>	θεωρία
Theoxena	<i>Theoxena</i>	Θεοξένα
third dimension, to project into	<i>bathynein</i>	βαθύνειν
third-order	<i>triôdoumenos</i>	τριωδούμενος
Thracian	<i>Thraix</i>	Θρᾷξ
Thrasymachus	<i>Thrasymachos</i>	Θρασύμαχος
three	<i>trias</i>	τριάς
three-dimensional	<i>stereos</i>	στερεός
Timaeus	<i>Timaïos</i>	Τίμαιος
time	<i>chronos</i>	χρόνος
time period	<i>hōra</i>	ώρα
Timycha	<i>Timycha</i>	Τιμύχα
Titanic	<i>Titanikos</i>	Τιτανικός
tool	<i>organon</i>	ὄργανον
total	<i>pantelês</i>	παντελής
trace	<i>emphasis</i>	ἐμφασις
trace back to something higher, to	<i>anapempein</i>	ἀναπέμπτειν
traditional saying / belief	<i>phêmê</i>	φήμη
tragedy	<i>tragôidia</i>	τραγωδία
train, to	<i>gymnazein</i>	γυμνάζειν
transcend, to	<i>chôrizein</i>	χωρίζειν
transcendence	<i>hyperbolê</i>	ὑπερβολή
transcendent	<i>chôristos</i>	χωριστός
transcendent	<i>exairein (aor. pass. part.)</i>	ἐξαιρεῖν
transition	<i>metabasis</i>	μετάβασις
triad	<i>trias</i>	τριάς
triangle	<i>trigônon</i>	τρίγωνον

tropic	<i>tropikos</i>	τροπικός
truth	<i>alêtheia</i>	ἀλήθεια
turn/revert back, to	<i>anastrephein</i>	ἀναστρέφειν
two	<i>dvas</i>	δύας
type	<i>typos</i>	τύπος
tyrannical	<i>tyrannikos</i>	τυραννικός
tyranny	<i>tyrannis</i>	τυραννίς
undergo, to	<i>paschein</i>	πάσχειν
underlie, to	<i>hypokeisthai</i>	ὑποκεῖσθαι
underlying subject	<i>hypokeimenos</i>	ὑποκείμενος
understand intellectually, to	<i>noein</i>	νοεῖν
understandable	<i>gnôrimos</i>	γνώριμος
understanding	<i>gnôsis</i>	γνώσις
understanding, concerned with	<i>gnôstikos</i>	γνωστικός
undisciplined	<i>akolastos</i>	ἀκόλαστος
uneducated	<i>apaideutos</i>	ἀπαιδευτος
unequal	<i>anisos</i>	ἄνισος
ungenerated	<i>agenêtos</i>	ἀγένητος
unhypothetical	<i>anypothetos</i>	ἀνυπόθετος
unification	<i>benôsis</i>	ἔνωσις
unified	<i>bênômenos</i>	ἡνωμένος
unified manner, in a	<i>beniaiôs</i>	ἐνιαίως
uni-form	<i>monoeidês</i>	μονοειδής
uni-form manner, in a	<i>monoeidôs</i>	μονοειδῶς
unify, to	<i>benizein</i>	ἐνίζειν
unify, to	<i>benoun</i>	ἐνοῦν
unique of its kind	<i>monogenês</i>	μονογενής
unitary	<i>benoeidês</i>	ἐνοειδής
united by nature, to be	<i>symphyein</i>	συμφύειν
unity	<i>benotês</i>	ἐνότης
unity-generating	<i>benopoios</i>	ἐνοποιός
universe	<i>pan</i>	πᾶν
Unlimit	<i>apeiros</i>	ἄπειρος
unmixed	<i>amigês</i>	ἄμιγής
unmixed	<i>amiktos</i>	ἄμικτος
unmoved	<i>akinêtos</i>	ἄκίνητος
unparticipated	<i>amethektos</i>	ἀμέθεκτος
unphilosophical	<i>aphilosophos</i>	ἀφιλόσοφος
unseemly	<i>aschêmôn</i>	ἄσχημων
unutterable	<i>aporrêtos</i>	ἀπόρρητος
useful	<i>chrêsimos</i>	χρήσιμος
varied	<i>poikilos</i>	ποικίλος
vehicle	<i>ochêma</i>	ὄχημα
Velocity Itself	<i>autotachos</i>	αὐτοτάχος



# English–Greek Glossary

vice	<i>kakia</i>	κακία
visible	<i>emphanês</i>	ἐμφανής
visible	<i>boratos</i>	όρατός
vision	<i>opsis</i>	ὄψις
vision	<i>thea</i>	θέα
vision, capable of	<i>horatikos</i>	όρατικός
vital	<i>zôtikos</i>	ζωτικός
vivific	<i>zôtikos</i>	ζωτικός
vowel	<i>phônêen</i>	φωνήεν
wane, to	<i>phthinein</i>	φθίνειν
waning	<i>phthsis</i>	φθισις
war	<i>polemos</i>	πόλεμος
war, to make	<i>polemein</i>	πολεμεῖν
war-like	<i>polemikos</i>	πολεμικός
wax block	<i>ekmageion</i>	ἐκμαγεῖον
waxing (of the moon)	<i>auxêsis</i>	αὔξησις
weak	<i>asthenês</i>	ἀσθενής
wealth	<i>chrêma</i>	χρῆμα
weave together, to	<i>symplekein</i>	συμπλέκειν
well-fated	<i>eumoiros</i>	εὐμοιρος
whole	<i>holos</i>	ὅλος
wholeness	<i>holotês</i>	όλότης
whorl ( <i>Rep.</i> 616e, f)	<i>spbondylos</i>	σφόνδυλος
wickedness	<i>ponêria</i>	πονηρία
will, act of	<i>boulêsis</i>	βούλησις
wings	<i>pterôma</i>	πτέρωμα
wisdom	<i>phronêsis</i>	φρόνησις
wise	<i>sophos</i>	σοφός
woman	<i>gynê</i>	γυνή
worthy	<i>axios</i>	ἄξιος
Xenocrates	<i>Xenokratês</i>	Ξενοκράτης
Zeus	<i>Zeus</i>	Ζεύς
Zeus, of or belonging to	<i>Dios</i>	Δίος
zodiac	<i>zôidiakos</i>	ζωδιακός
zodiac, signs of	<i>zôidion</i>	ζώδιον
Zoroaster	<i>Zôroastrês</i>	Ζωροάστρης

## Greek Word Index

This index includes the significant vocabulary in Proclus' text, along with the dominant translation(s) used in this volume. The page and line numbers are to the Greek text of Kroll which appear in the margins of our translation. The first number (1 or 2) indicates the volume of Kroll's Greek text since the translation in the present book spans those volumes.

- ἄβατος, inaccessible 1.228.7  
 ἀγαθοειδής, in the form of the good  
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 1.248.20, 1.250.8, 1.252.17,  
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1.218.24, 1.220.14, 1.220.18,  
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1.288.14, 2.5.24, 2.10.3, 2.10.8,  
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necessity’, ‘it is necessary’, etc.)

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1.217.22, 1.221.6, 1.225.15, 1.229.1,  
1.229.26, 1.232.22, 1.236.13,  
1.236.23, 1.238.15, 1.240.9, 1.243.1,  
1.251.15, 1.254.5, 1.263.7, 1.270.22,  
1.270.26, 1.271.2, 1.278.15,  
1.282.19, 2.1.13, 2.5.25, 2.9.13,  
2.9.21, 2.10.2, 2.10.11, 2.17.4,  
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1.282.3, 1.284.12, 1.285.18, 1.286.2,  
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1.288.26 proportion (as neuter  
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2.36.6

ἀναπιμπλάναι, fill 1.210.15, 2.76.6, 2.95.11  
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ἀνατείνειν, extend 1.246.5

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1.240.1, 1.241.25, 1.242.4, 1.242.6,  
1.242.11, 1.242.23, 1.243.2,  
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1.244.19, 1.245.2, 1.245.14,  
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1.249.25–26, 1.250.1, 1.250.16,  
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1.251.20, 1.252.7, 1.252.9,  
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1.255.27–28, 1.256.5, 1.256.8,  
1.256.10, 1.256.21, 1.256.29,  
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1.241.12, 1.241.15, 1.241.20, 1.242.8,  
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1.292.30, 1.293.11, 2.1.5, 2.7.9,  
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